THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 401

Approved June 30, 1994

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF DESIGNATING PORTIONS OF THE CITY AS AN EMPOWERMENT ZONE/ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY

WHEREAS: The City of Providence contains census tracts eligible to receive designation as an Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community and,

WHEREAS: The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Program will marshal Federal resources that when combined with City, State and private resources form a long-term, sustainable economic revitalization strategy for Providence and,

WHEREAS: The Providence Plan has undertaken a focused strategic planning process during the last three months including dozens of task force and subcommittee meetings and

WHEREAS: Citizens of Providence have at all stages of the development of the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community application had opportunity to offer suggestions and opinions for the application components and

WHEREAS: The City Council supports the submission of this highly competitive application and urges the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to act favorably on behalf of the citizens of the City of Providence,

NOW THEREFORE: The City Council of the City of Providence requests that Mayor Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. sign and submit the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community application as directed on or before June 30, 1994.

IN CITY COUNCIL
June 29, 1994
READ AND PASSED
PRES.
Michael R. Clement
CLERK

APPROVED
JUN 30 1994
MAYOR

JUN 6 5 02 PM '94

CITY CLERK
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

READ AND PASSED
IN CITY COUNCIL

CITY CLERK

THE COMMITTEE ON
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT
RENEWAL & PLANNING

Recommends Continuance

Barbara A. Cosier
Clerk

6/6/94
6/13/94
6/16/94

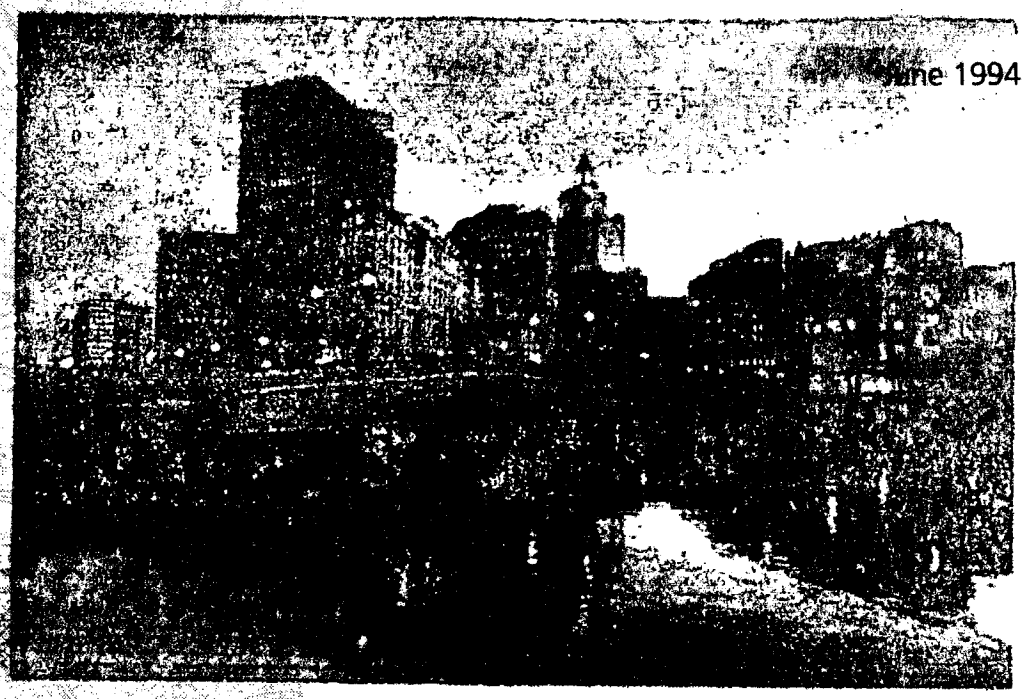
THE COMMITTEE ON
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT
RENEWAL & PLANNING

Approves Passage of
The Within Resolution

Barbara A. Cosier
Chr

6/29/94 Clerk

Nomination for Providence, Rhode Island's Designation as an Enterprise Community



June 1994

State of Rhode Island
Bruce Sundlun
Governor

City of Providence
Vincent A. Cianci, Jr.
Mayor

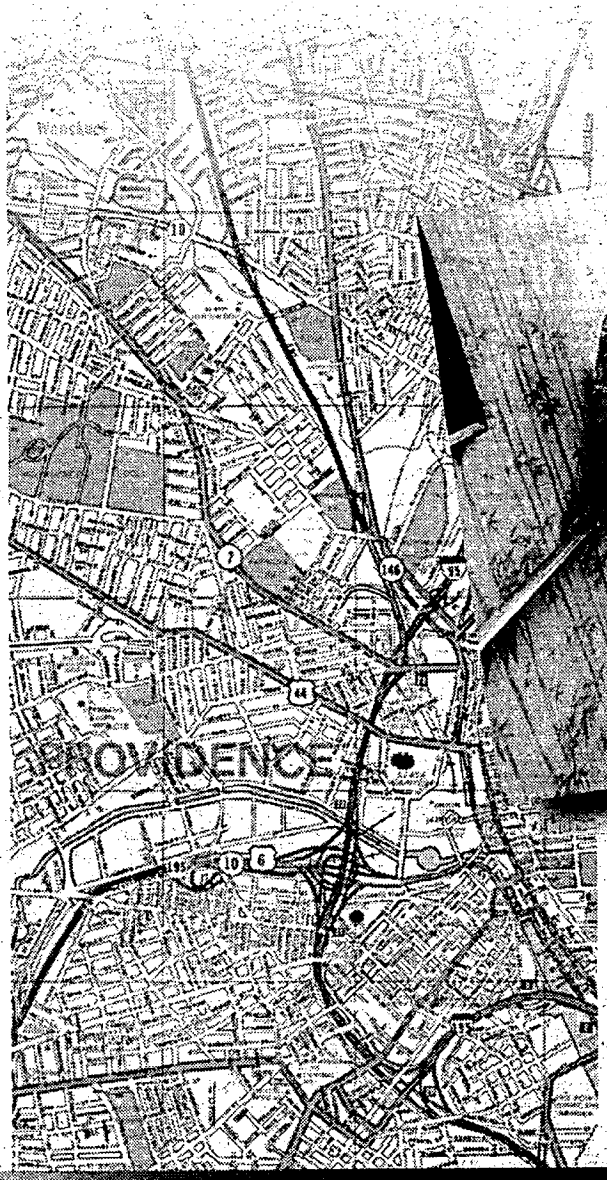
Contents

List of Abbreviations

ALP	Alternative Learning Project
APC	American Power Conversion
CCD	Coalition for Community Development
CCRI	Community College of RI
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CDC	Community Development Corporation
CHAS	Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy
CHIC	Capitol Hill Interaction Council
CIAP	Comprehensive Improvement Assistance Program
COZ	Child Opportunity Zone
CSO	Combined Sewer Overflow
DARE	Direct Action for Rights and Equality
DCYF	Department of Children, Youth and Families
DHS	Department of Human Services
DIS	Department of Inspections and Standards
DPD	Department of Planning and Development
DPW	Department of Public Works
ENHS	Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services
FACTS	Family Aid Center for Treatment and Support
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHA	Federal Housing Authority
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMR	Fair Market Rent
GNH/CLT	Good News Housing/Community Land Trust
JOBS	Job Opportunities and Basic Skills
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
LEA	Local Education Agency
LISC	Local Initiatives Support Corporation
MIDC	Minority Investment Development Corporation
NBC	Narragansett Bay Commission
NDF	Neighborhood Development Fund
NEA	National Endowment for the Arts
NEF	National Equity Fund
NEPP	Neighborhood Empowerment for Prevention Program
PCL	Preparation for Community Living
PEDC	Providence Economic Development Corporation
PILOT	Payment in Lieu of Taxes
PHA	Providence Housing Authority
PPHC	Providence Plan Housing Corporation
PPS	Providence Public Schools
PRA	Providence Redevelopment Agency
PROBE	Providence Blueprint for Education
Project BASIC	Bringing Advocacy and Strategy Into the City
RETB	Regional Employment and Training Board
RIC	Rhode Island College
RIDED	Rhode Island Department of Economic Development
RIDEM	Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
RIDET	Rhode Island Department of Employment and Training
RIDOT	Rhode Island Department of Transportation
RIHMFC	Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation
RIHPC	Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission
RIPEC	Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council
RIPTA	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
RISCA	Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
RISD	Rhode Island School of Design
SAPTF	Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force
SAYFDP	Southeast Asian Youth and Family Development Project
SEAP	Southeast Asian Parents
SEDC	Socio-Economic Development Corporation
SGO	Statewide Governance Organization
SSBG	Social Services Block Grant
SWAP	Stop Wasting Abandoned Property
TAP	Total Arts Providence
TIF	Tax Incremental Financing
URI	University of Rhode Island
WEHDC	West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation

Part I ***Introduction and Overview***

Introduction



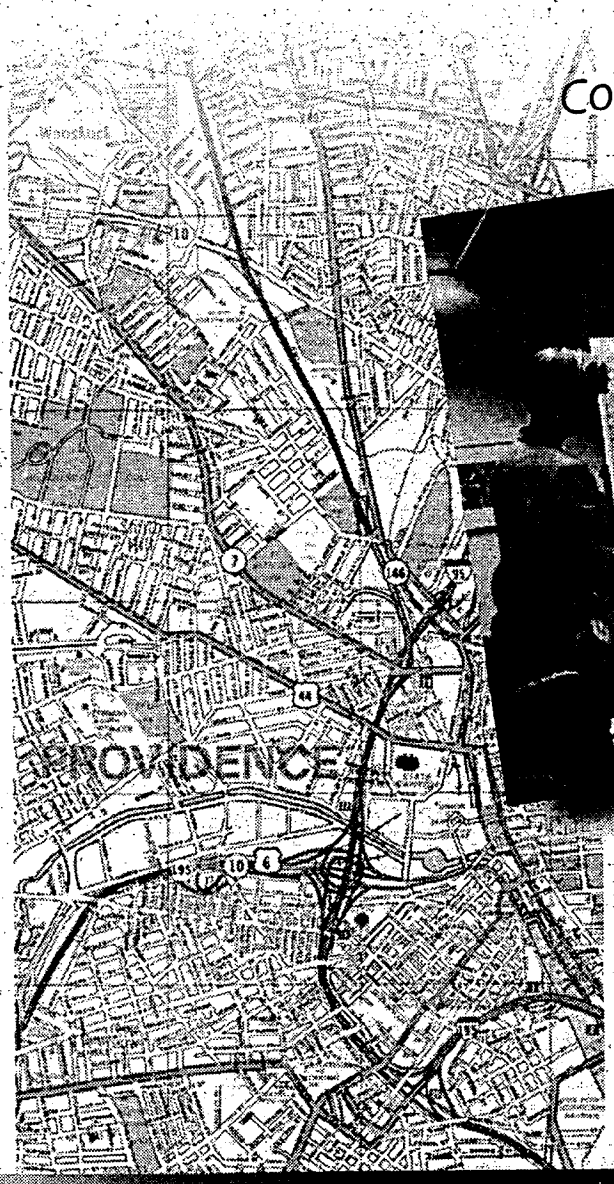
Chapter 1
Introduction

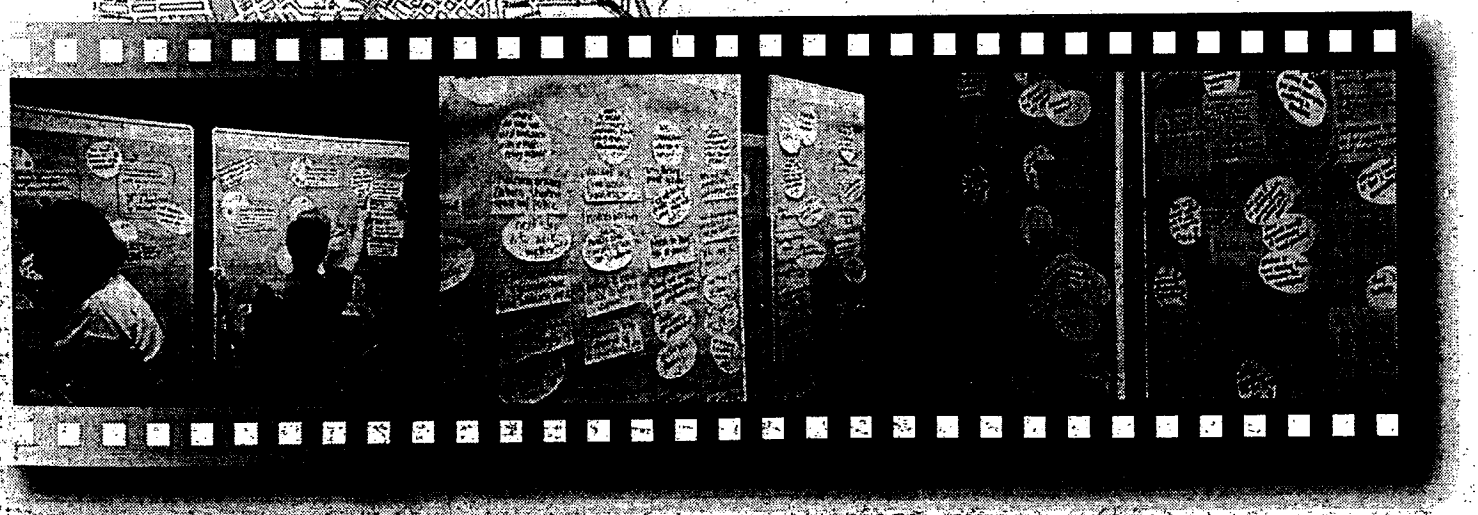
This is an application for designation of certain neighborhoods in Providence, Rhode Island as an Enterprise Community, within the framework of the Clinton Administration's Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Community program. The application builds upon several important local planning initiatives that were in place before the EZ/EC program was announced, but the availability of the program provided an opportunity to utilize an innovative strategic planning process that involved literally hundreds of Providence residents in extended deliberations over a period of six months. Planners and professors, bankers and bus drivers, housewives and construction workers all came together to develop a vision of the future of Providence. As will become clear in the pages that follow, the citizens of Providence have achieved a remarkable degree of consensus over the city's future. It will also become clear that the strategic vision developed by the Providence community closely reflects the underlying philosophy of the EZ/EC program: this is a comprehensive, neighborhood-based and integrative plan for resolving the city's problems.

During the past decade Providence has experienced extraordinarily rapid and troubling changes in its social fabric. Within the past five years alone the city has lost more than half of its manufacturing jobs, while increasing its service sector jobs by 50 percent. Immigration, particularly from Latin America and Southeast Asia, has flooded the schools and the job market with individuals who need special language and cultural training if they are to gain employment in the emerging service economy. Lacking job skills, the immigrants too often join other minority populations in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty, where income is low, rates of teenage pregnancy are high, crime and drug abuse are rampant, and where poor housing and vacant lots abound. It is precisely these neighborhoods that are the focus of this Enterprise Community application.

Providence citizens and their elected officials recognize that the problems of such neighborhoods cannot and will not be resolved through piecemeal solutions. The problems of people in poor neighborhoods are multiple and cumulative, and thus must be addressed by strategies that attack all of these interrelated problems at once. In the pages that follow we propose just such a strategy, built on the mobilization of all of the community's resources, and implemented by new partnerships between the schools, neighborhood organizations, nonprofit organizations, business, labor and government. Major reforms are already underway in the schools, social service and health delivery systems of Providence. Major new initiatives for job creation and for linking jobs to education and training are also well under way in the private sector. The challenge for Providence as an Enterprise Community is to build new partnerships that will bring these efforts together in a way that will have maximum impact on the targeted neighborhoods. It is a daunting challenge but, as the following pages will demonstrate, we accept that challenge, with great enthusiasm.

Community-Based Strategic Planning in Providence





Chapter 2
Community-Based Strategic Planning in Providence

Overview: Community Planning in Providence

During the past few years, residents of the city of Providence have been engaged in a number of comprehensive planning efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of life in Providence. These include the revision of the city's comprehensive plan, the creation of The Providence Plan in April 1992, the PROBE Commission's report on the Providence school system, released in March 1993, two comprehensive assessments of the human service system, and detailed examinations of the quality of minority health care and the workforce, to name only a few.

Thus, in preparing its application to the federal government for an Enterprise Community, Providence was fortunate to have this solid foundation of recent knowledge and experience to build upon. In designing both the strategic planning process as well as preparing its plan, Providence emphasized the need to work together, to build collaboratives of collaborations rather than begin over anew from square one. Before elaborating on the community-based strategic planning model used in Providence, it is useful to briefly review previous community planning efforts in Providence.

Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan. In July 1993, the city released a revised comprehensive plan. The result of over four years of work by the Department of Planning and Development, the City Plan Commission, a large number of citizens, city staff, and consultants, the plan presents a guide for future growth and change in Rhode Island's capital city. Topics covered in the plan include economic development, services and facilities, open space and recreation, land use, housing, natural and cultural resources, transportation, historic preservation and environmental protection. In addition to providing a statement of goals and objectives regarding how the city should develop over the next twenty years, the comprehensive plan also includes an implementation program that outlines key actions needed to meet the plan's goals and objectives.

Throughout the preparation of Providence 2000, the City Plan Commission and the Department of Planning and Development encouraged and relied on review and comment from the public to insure the overall validity of the plan. Interviews were held with key representatives throughout the city, public workshops were held at a number of locations, including several public schools and community centers; drafts of the plan were distributed to a large number of people, including leaders of nonprofit organizations, directors of public service agencies, leaders of resident and neighborhood associations, public officials, regulatory board members and city department heads. Copies of the draft plan were also made available to the general public at the Department of Planning and Development and all branches of the Providence Public Library. A second series of public meetings were held in several neighborhoods at which time a draft of the land use portion of the plan was presented for review and comment. A citywide public hearing was held in October 1992 and following additional revisions, the City Plan Commission and the City Council subsequently adopted the plan.

Comprehensive Planning in Providence. Planning has been a vital catalyst for change in Providence for the past 50 years. Comprehensive planning in Providence takes place at three different levels. Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan, is the first phase and establishes general, citywide policies relating to land use and the provision of services, recreation and open space, historic preservation, housing, economic development, transportation and parking, and natural resources.

The second level of comprehensive planning in Providence is the Comprehensive Plan series. These are issue specific plans which address issues on a citywide level. When completed this series will include a Waterfront Land Use Plan, an Harbor Management Plan, an Historic Preservation Plan, an Housing Plan, a Traffic Plan, a Parking Plan, a Park and Recreation Plan, and a Plan for the Provision of Human Services. The purpose of these plans are to insure that planning in the city of Providence is ongoing, continuous, inclusive and appropriately detailed. Plans that have been completed in this series include: *Downcity Providence* (1992), *Providence Cares: A Transition Plan* (1992), *Providence Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy* (1992), *The Capital Improvement Program: A Plan to Improve the Process* (1992), *A Preservation Plan for Providence* (1991), and *Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan* (1992).

The third level of the comprehensive planning process is a series of area plans that address issues on a neighborhood level. These plans are much more detailed and specific than plans produced at the other two levels, although all plans in this series do conform to the goals and policies outlined in the comprehensive plan. Neighborhood plans have recently been completed for a number of neighborhoods, and city planners are working on the development of 20 neighborhood commercial plans.

The Providence Plan. The Providence Plan, announced by Mayor Cianci and Governor Sundlun in April 1992, is an ambitious and comprehensive effort at revitalizing Rhode Island's capital city. A nonprofit corporation established by the city and the state, The Providence Plan seeks to build a series of partnerships among city, state, and federal agencies, business, labor, civic and religious groups, community organizations, academic insititutions, and concerned residents. Its primary goals are: (1) to put people to work, (2) retain the city's middle class, (3) make our neighborhoods safe and livable, (4) improve the quality of the public schools, (5) provide decent and affordable housing, and (6) increase jobs and taxes in downtown Providence.

In addition to being a strategy for revitalization, The Providence Plan is also an organization whose mission is to serve as "keeper of the vision" through its efforts to direct a community-based strategic planning process that will be needed to translate these ambitious goals into specific program initiatives. The Providence Plan is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, governed by a board of directors of ten individuals, five of whom were appointed by the governor and five of whom were appointed by the mayor. The chairman of the board was jointly appointed by the governor and the mayor. The Providence Plan is funded by contributions from the city and the state, and by contributions from private businesses, nonprofit insitutions, and federal grants in aid.

Providence Blueprint for Education (PROBE). In February 1993, the PROBE Commission, a diverse group of 33 parents and community leaders, released its comprehensive report on the Providence Public Schools. Perhaps the most thorough study to date of an urban school system, the PROBE report examined a number of key areas critical to improving the performance of the city's school system. These included budget and facilities, governance, teachers, students, parents, and community involvement. What is perhaps most distinctive about the PROBE study is the manner in which it was undertaken (commission members participated in data collection and analysis in at least one of six different topic areas) and the wide range of data collection strategies utilized. In addition to analysis of school department aggregate data (student demographics and performance, dropout rates, teacher attendance, etc.) and selected documents (e.g., budgets, teacher contracts), a variety of data collection strategies were employed to listen to the perspectives of key stakeholders of the Providence Public Schools in order to better understand the problems and opportunities. These strategies included the following:

- *Structured observations* of the School Superintendent and four school principals.
- PROBE staff conducted 24 *focus groups* of teachers, students, parents, principals and assistant principals, central administrators, students in special programs, and business people involved in the schools.

- *Structured interviews* were conducted of School Board members, the Superintendent, many central administrators, the Providence Teachers Union President, and the Mayor. Many additional informal interviews were held with other stakeholders.
- Based on the focus groups and structured interviews, *survey instruments* were developed and administered to teachers, principals, high school students, and parents of Providence students. Overall, 64 percent of the 1,250 classroom teachers employed by Providence during the 1991-1992 school year returned their surveys; 71 percent of the 32 school principals completed their surveys; 368 surveys were completed by students from all five of Providence's high schools, with returns from the stratified random sample almost identical to the overall demographic composition of the overall high school population; 626 parents from a broad cross-section of schools and different racial and ethnic backgrounds returned written questionnaires; and 12 of the 32 Parent Teacher Organization presidents completed their survey instrument.
- *Informal visits* were completed at 12 of the city's public schools. During each of these visits, PROBE staff and commission members held extensive conversations with the school principal, toured the building, visited some classrooms and spent time in the teacher's lounge listening to teachers' concerns.

Needs for the Nineties. The United Way of Southeastern New England and SJS, Inc., a public policy research organization, managed a two-year intensive study of the human service system in Rhode Island which culminated in the publication of *Needs for the Nineties: A Human Service Agenda* in June 1993. A Sponsoring Consortium, composed of 32 members from the public and private sectors, and a 42-member Research Team of Loaned Executives also participated in this voluntary effort.

Needs for the Nineties is a 305-page report that provides a comprehensive mapping of the human service system and offers a common base of understanding of how services are organized and funded in Rhode Island. In addition to analyzing costs, policies, programs, and regulations, the Research Team was committed to listening to the consumers of Rhode Island to gain a better understanding of every aspect of the human service delivery system. To that end, approximately 1,000 unstructured interviews of consumers of human services and human service professionals throughout Rhode Island were completed. These included social workers and their clients, school teachers and principals, police officers, parents and small business owners, inmates in prison, adolescents, and children playing in the parks as well as those playing in the streets. In the course of conducting these interviews, members of the Research Team visited social service agencies, Food Stamp and Unemployment Insurance offices, day care centers, prisons, shelters for the homeless, churches, and soup kitchens, to name but a few.

Following the release of the *Needs for the Nineties* report in July 1993, Governor Bruce Sundlun appointed The Rhode Island Needs for the Nineties Commission to follow-up on the principal findings of the report. The Commission had three main goals:

1. Using the principals set forth in the original report, the Commission was asked to focus on how to foster greater independence among families and individuals.
2. The Commission was asked to examine how the report supported the development and ongoing implementation of major and complimentary human service initiatives underway in Rhode Island.

3. The Commission was asked to identify models of service delivery which promote economic independence and social protections, including ways of creating and sustaining a climate for innovation.

In releasing its report in March 1994, the Commission emphasized the need to develop new ways of moving people toward and into jobs: "We are convinced that we must be more creative and flexible with our support services and educational programs along with figuring out how to help businesses generate work and hire the employees they need to be successful." The Commission added: "The bottom line is simply this. Needs have changed. We can no longer conduct business as usual. The solution is not to call for more money. We must use existing dollars to effect change, because significant new resources will not be forthcoming. We must find ways of engaging all sectors, not just government, to help reframe our entire approach to service delivery and economic development. Schools, colleges, unions, civic groups, businesses, philanthropic organizations, community agencies, and religious groups all must play a role in partnering change."

In response to the Needs for the Nineties Commission report, the United Way of Southeastern New England and the Rhode Island Human Resources Investment Council formed a public/private partnership to jointly fund a limited number of model collaborative programs which target services to individuals to enable them to overcome barriers to employment. The partnership seeks to support collaborative efforts which use existing services (e.g., child care, transportation, health care, housing) strategically, coupling them with education and training, resulting in job placement for targeted individuals. A Request for Proposals was issued by the Partnership in May 1994 and it is anticipated that the initial demonstration projects will be underway in September 1994.

Families First. In December 1992, Rhode Island was one of five states selected by the Pew Charitable Trusts to receive a planning grant to participate in the Trusts' The Children's Initiative: Making Systems Work. Two communities, Providence and Newport County, were selected by Rhode Island to participate in the initial planning. The principal goal of the initiative in Rhode Island, known as Families First, is to assure that every child has the opportunity and resources to achieve a healthy, happy, and productive adult life. Specific objectives include the following: (1) to improve child health, (2) improve child development, (3) improve children's ability to learn, and (4) strengthen the ability of families to nurture and support their children. The core element envisioned in the plan was a system of neighborhood-based family centers, designed, managed, and governed by neighborhood residents, that would provide core services and a variety of other services. The predominant theme that characterized Families First planning at both the state and local level is neighborhood self-determination, respect for multi-cultural communities, cultural sensitivity, bilingual staffing, and a high degree of community volunteer participation.

The nine-month planning process, which took place between January and September 1993, occurred at two levels—statewide and in the two demonstration communities. At the state level, a 72-member Statewide Governance Organization was established with equal representation from each of four major stakeholder groups: service consumers, provider organizations, government, and civic and business leaders. Fifty-five percent of the SGO membership consisted of representatives from state agencies, statewide organizations, or individuals from communities outside of Newport and Providence; the remaining 45 percent of the SGO membership came from the Newport and Providence planning organizations, in order to facilitate coordination between state and community level planning activities.

In Providence, a 40-member planning organization was established, with 10 members from each of the four major stakeholder groups outlined above. The Providence Families First planning group formally convened in March 1993 and issued its plan to Rhode Island Families First six months later. The Providence Families First strategic plan represented the culmination of the efforts of over 100 Providence citizens who came together committed to a shared vision that included the following key elements:

1. Support and build on the strengths of people
2. Respect and nurture diversity
3. Make a solid commitment to changing the human service delivery system
4. Programs and service strategies developed by the planning group should be driven by needs, not by funding, bureaucratic expediency or politics
5. Most import, the planning process should include those individuals the Families First initiative is intended to serve

The Providence Families First planning group organized itself into five primary committees (needs assessment and site selection, family center services and linkages, community outreach, staffing and financing, and governance). Over the next several months, more than 100 meetings were held by the various committees during which discussions were held, issues debated, and new ideas presented as the planning participants tried to unravel the complex human service delivery system and develop new methods to strengthen children and families in Providence. In addition to committee meetings, a number of focus groups were conducted with several different target populations and a written questionnaire covering various aspects of the human service system was completed by more than 100 human service agencies in Providence. Based on these meetings and the quantitative and qualitative data collected during the planning process, a strategic plan was fashioned during the months of July and August of 1993, and presented to Rhode Island Families First in September 1993 for inclusion in the state's submission to the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Although the Pew Charitable Trusts ultimately decided not to fund any of the five states that submitted implementation plans, Providence and Rhode Island benefited immensely from their participation in the strategic planning that was undertaken as part of the Children's Initiative. We now have a more comprehensive understanding of needs, service delivery patterns, and barriers to service, as well as a greater degree of consensus around an organizing concept for human services that focuses on a holistic response to the needs of children and their families.

Rhode Island Skills Commission. In 1991, Governor Bruce Sundlun assembled a Skills Commission consisting of more than 100 representatives from business and industry, education, and the public sector to address the issues reported in America's Choice: high skills or low wages. Rhode Islander Ira Magaziner was appointed by the Governor to co-chair the commission, and in May 1992, they released their report: Rhode Island's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages. Similar in findings to the national report, the Rhode Island study recommended the adoption of a certificate of initial mastery before students could graduate from high school and further proposed three- and four-year professional programs leading to certifications in occupations not requiring a college degree. The Commission also recommended a much stronger linkage between schools and the private sector.

In summary, citizens of Providence have had unprecedented opportunities over the past couple of years to engage in strategic planning initiatives designed to improve the quality of life in Rhode Island's capital city.

Providence's Strategic Planning Process

The Clinton/Gore Administration's Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Communities program has afforded Providence an opportunity to pull together and focus a great deal of good work that has taken place over the past several years. The challenge facing Providence was not to reinvent the wheel, but to build off of the energy that has been created in a variety of areas over the past couple of years, as new public/private collaborative planning processes have been launched in the areas of housing, education, human services, employment and training, health, and economic development, to name but a few.

To coordinate the preparation of Providence's Enterprise Community application, Mayor Cianci designated the city's Department of Planning and Development and The Providence Plan, a nonprofit strategic planning organization created by the city and the state, to direct those efforts. The community-based strategic planning process launched in Providence had two key objectives: (1) to synthesize and extend community planning efforts that were either underway or had recently been completed and (2) to ensure that the development of Providence's strategic plan was undertaken in a manner consistent with the federal government's objective of a grass roots oriented effort.

Steering Committee and Community Task Forces. After carefully studying community-based strategic planning efforts underway in other cities, consulting with officials from the National Civic League and from Organizational Futures, Inc., a Providence-based firm, Providence launched its community-based strategic planning effort in March 1994. After consulting with a number of business and community leaders, officials from the Department of Planning and Development and The Providence Plan created a 47-member Steering Committee to oversee the development of Providence's Enterprise Community application (see Appendix A for a list of members). The Steering Committee is made up of the co-chairs of twelve community task forces and 21 members who serve at-large. The twelve task forces were organized around key substantive policy areas and include the following: job creation; downtown development; neighborhood economic development; workforce training and development; affordable housing; urban fabric; arts, culture and historic preservation; public safety; education; youth; supporting families; and substance abuse. Members of the Steering Committee represented a diverse cross-section of key stakeholder groups in Providence, including participants from city and state agencies, business, industry and civic organizations, nonprofit institutions, community-based organizations, and citizens. About one in three Steering Committee members were women and one in four members were persons of color. Overall, almost half of all Steering Committee members were women or minorities.

More than 150 people attended a community workshop that was held in early April to kick off *ProVision*: Planning Our Future, the community-based strategic planning process used to prepare the strategic plan that would form the foundation for Providence's Enterprise Community application. Those who attended the workshop took part in an orientation session, participated in a baseline analysis and visioning exercise to assess current conditions in each of twelve key policy areas, and signed up to participate in one or more of the 12 community task forces. Over a seven-week period, these task forces met on a weekly basis. The meetings were presided over by the task force co-chairs and aided by the presence of a trained facilitator who lead each task force through a series of exercises designed to promote discussion in a semi-structured format to ensure that each task force addressed a similar set of questions and issues pertaining to its policy domain. The topic areas for each of these sessions included the following:

- *Week 1. Community Workshop.* Orientation and overview, visioning exercise for city, visioning exercise for policy area.
- *Week 2. Overview.* Discussion and baseline assessment of where Providence is today.
- *Week 3. Needs Assessment and Environmental Scan.* Assessment and validation of key social indicators, analysis of factors that will affect Providence's future, identifying both opportunities and threats on the horizon.

- *Week 4. Resources to Implement Plan.* Assessment of community assets that can be used to implement the strategic plan, analysis and assessment of most effective way to utilize existing and new resources that might become available, including federal funds, state and local funds, and private, nonprofit and community resources.
- *Week 5. Barriers to Successful Implementation of Plan.* Identification of current barriers to achieve elements of the strategic plan, including federal statutes, regulations and program requirements, state and local barriers, and barriers due to race, language, culture, and income.
- *Week 6. Partnerships and Linkages.* Discussion of how to create and nurture partnerships and linkages within each policy area as well as discussion of how to nurture partnerships that cut across policy areas and public, private, nonprofit, and community sectors.
- *Week 7. Summing Up: Vision for Change.* Discussion of how we can better integrate efforts to create new economic opportunities, invest in places, and invest in people and development of an action plan for achieving the vision outlined in the strategic plan.

To promote integration and synthesis of the issues and ideas raised in the community task force meetings, the task forces held their final meetings jointly over a three-day period with each cluster of task forces (creating economic opportunity, investing in places, investing in people) meeting in a day-long workshop. The following week, representatives from each cluster met for a day-long workshop to further integrate the work of the community task forces.

The Steering Committee also met regularly to address both process and substantive issues. In addition, the Steering Committee held two half-day workshops to discuss key issues relating to the strategic plan (e.g., proposed uses of funds and proposed boundaries for the Enterprise Community zone) and to respond to working drafts of the strategic plan.

Community Poster Sessions. Recognizing that not everyone would be able to make the time commitment necessary to participate in the community task force meetings, The Providence Plan conducted a number of community poster sessions in several locations throughout the city designed to broaden and diversify the extent of community participation in the development of Providence's strategic plan. The community poster sessions allowed citizens to engage in three exercises:

1. Participate in a baseline analysis of where they believed Providence to be today in each of the twelve policy areas included in the strategic plan. This was done by asking participants to place a sticky dot on a scale that ranged from 1 (miserable) to 5 (optimal) for each policy area.
2. Participants were asked to share their dreams and aspirations for Providence by writing on post-it notes the characteristics and attributes they would use to describe the ideal Providence in the year 2010.
3. Participants were asked to complete an open-ended written questionnaire that asked them to share their opinions regarding the city's most critical needs, the most important characteristics they would use to describe an ideal Providence in the year 2010, the most serious challenges and barriers that must be overcome in order to achieve their vision for a better Providence, and the city's greatest assets or opportunities for moving forward to achieve their vision.

The community poster sessions were conducted during May and early June and were held in places where people tend to congregate as part of their regular activities. Sites chosen included grocery stores and shopping plazas, health clinics, little league baseball games, community centers, churches, including a Spanish-language mass,

recreation centers, senior citizens housing developments, and citywide and neighborhood festivals such as City Year's Serve-A-Thon, the St. Joseph's Festival, the Woonasquatucket River Festival, and the Thayer Street Arts Festival.

Citizens were given the opportunity to participate in any or all of the three community planning exercises. Overall, about 700 people participated in one or more of these activities. Due to the nature of these exercises, which were designed more to encourage community participation than to conduct a scientific survey of public opinion, it was not possible to systematically gather information on the demographic characteristics of all community poster session participants. About one out of three participants did place a sticky dot on a large map of Providence indicating the approximate location of their residence. Based on an analysis of these responses, at least 23 of the city's 25 neighborhood areas were represented by the respondents, and in all likelihood, residents from each neighborhood were reached in some way. Based on this sample, a substantial majority of the respondents lived in the area proposed for inclusion in Providence's Enterprise Community zone, with about half of the participants residing in one of the following neighborhoods: the West End, Elmwood, Washington Park, Lower South Providence, and Upper South Providence.

Other Methods for Gathering Public Input. In addition, focus groups were held with large employers, small businesses, and individuals who have been successful in creating new and innovative partnerships, collaborations, and linkages. Also, interviews were held with key city and state officials who are at the forefront of reinventing government. At the State level, an advisory group consisting of liaisons designated by key state departments and agencies was created to assist Providence in the development of its strategic plan. This group was chaired by the Governor's director of intergovernmental relations.

Metaplan. Much of the group process used to stimulate community involvement in this planning process was based on a method of group communication called Metaplan. The Metaplan method of group communication is interactive and highly visual. Prior to a meeting, discussion questions are scripted out. Each question is built on the one before, in concert with the meeting's desired outcomes. The questions are designed to provoke thoughtful responses. In pure Metaplan, brown paper and cards are used to transform the questions into 4'x4' posters. The posters are used both in presentation and discussion.

In the meeting, the posters become visual representations of the ideas, debates and explorations that the questions stimulate. Participants have the opportunity to contribute in written form and verbally. All thoughts are written on cards (using the participant's own words) and posted. The cards are presented, discussed, and can be moved around on the poster. Thus, the moderator, with participant approval, can cluster similar ideas and demonstrate oppositional or related topics. The ability to move ideas makes Metaplan far more dynamic than flip charts. In addition, the posters are hung on moveable pin-boards so that an entire discussion can be displayed, not just one page at a time.

How Metaplan was Adapted to *ProVision.* Pure Metaplan was utilized in planning the community input process, training The Providence Plan staff to facilitate the task force meetings, developing the task force meeting plan and questions, and integrating the data from all the task forces.

The task force meetings themselves were moderated using an adaptation of Metaplan. The principles remained the same, but less costly supplies were used. Participants were asked to abide by the discussion rules to which were added: no personal attacks and no hidden agendas. Instead of cards, the sessions utilized post-its of different colors. Each of the seven meetings for all twelve task forces had a theme and each group was asked the same questions on that theme: vision for the city, overview of existing programs/baseline assessment, needs assessment, resources to implement the plan, barriers to successful implementation, and partnerships and linkages. The seventh, integrative meeting was conducted with representatives of the twelve task forces using pure Metaplan. Three topical groups were formed from the task forces: investing in economic opportunity, investing in places and investing in people. Subsequently, representatives of those groups participated in a final integration session employing pure Metaplan.

The principles of Metaplan were also used in the community poster sessions. For these events we developed a set of posters (also used in the preliminary task force meetings) that permitted people to rate the city in each of the twelve topical areas. This was done using dots applied to a written scale. The goal was not to gather data scientifically but to get a sense of the energy of the people who live and work in Providence, where they feel the city is. It also sent a message that their voice could be counted. An additional poster asked people to contribute their specific ideas on what their vision for Providence was. These ideas were written on post-its and glued to the brown paper.

Disagreement and Resolution

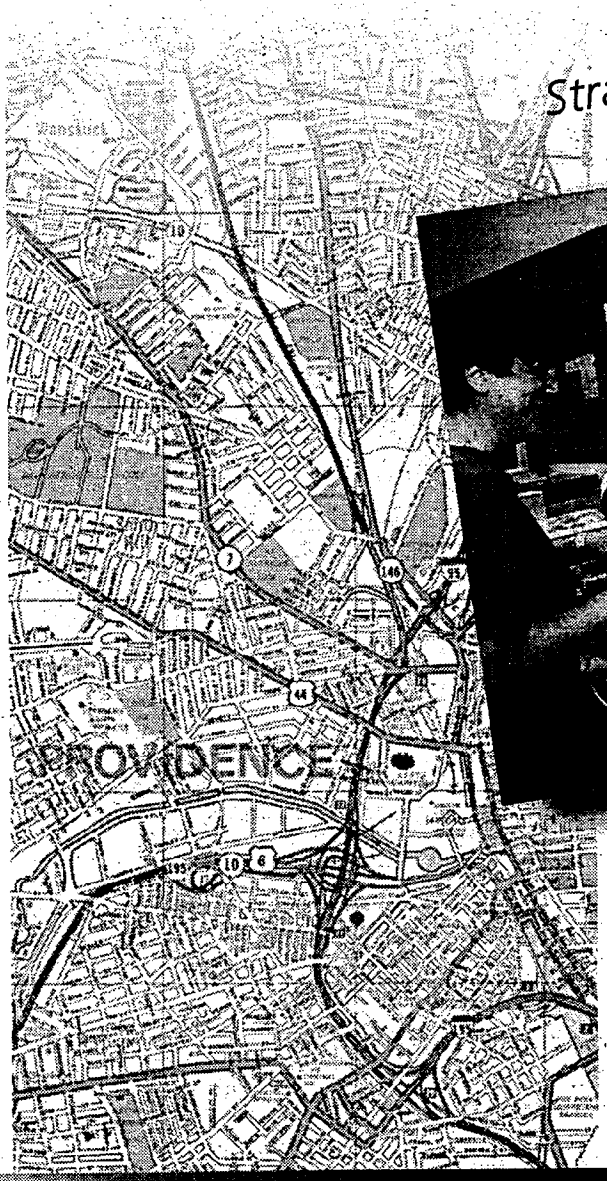
Bringing a group to consensus is difficult under most circumstances and particularly challenging when bringing together diverse groups of people. The Metaplan method anticipates that disagreement will arise, and although the goal is to come as close as possible to group agreement, dissenting opinions are respected and noted. While Metaplan has been used in previous planning exercises with groups and organizations in Providence, these efforts were self-contained within a single organization. *ProVision* represented the first time the Metaplan method had been used in such a public and open process, and with such a diverse group of participants.

One issue of disagreement that arose during the planning process concerned how some participants in the planning process, particularly representatives of public agencies, responded to this process. In one incident, one task force co-chair became visibily upset about some of the comments that had been recorded in the meeting minutes and demanded to know who made those comments. The co-chair even went as far as to check the

attendance sheet and began calling those who had attended the meeting to inquire as to why they had not defended the co-chair's agency against remarks the co-chair felt were plainly inappropriate and inaccurate. Once the facilitators and staff reviewed the ground rules with the co-chair (e.g., participants were encouraged to "speak their truth, and to speak from their heart"), that the value of the Metaplan technique was that *everyone's* comments were acknowledged, and that the actual strategic plan would be a melding and tempering of this exchange of ideas, along with other sources of input (e.g., program and statistical data), the co-chair became one of our most enthusiastic participants and supporters, and made a number of important contributions to the overall strategic planning process.

Another issue of disagreement that arose during the strategic planning process had to due with the intersection of a predominantly grassroots-based planning process with the concerns of local elected officials that there was no accountability in the process regarding the proposed uses of Enterprise Community funds. A number of council members felt that they had been left out of the loop and were uncomfortable with the flow of funds, from Washington to the state, and from the state to the participating entities designated in the strategic plan as implementation agents. Several members of the city council drew comparisons between the Enterprise Community program and the city's Community Development Block Grant program, noting that under the latter program, the City Council had control over the allocation of funds to delegate agencies. After a presentation to a council subcommittee and further discussions with individual councilmembers, an effort was made to accomodate the concerns of the Council regarding greater control over the use of Enterprise Community funds, yet still maintain true to the statutory objectives of the legislation that this be a program driven by grassroots participation and one that encourages the empowerment of low income communities. As a result of these discussions it was agreed that a monitoring, oversight, and evaluation committee would be established that would include two members of the city council as well as two additional appointments to the oversight committee made by the city council.

Strategic Vision for Change: Key Strategic Initiatives



Chapter 3
Strategic Vision for Change and Key Strategic Initiatives

Vision Statement

The remarkable flowering of community-based planning initiatives during the past three years, described in Chapter 2, reflects a growing awareness among community leaders that old policies cannot deal effectively with the new realities of urban decline in Providence. In the past, the several components of urban decay were identified and separate programs were established to deal with them: housing, income support, food stamps, medical care, child care, drugs, crime, transportation, and so on. Today, community leaders recognize that urban problems are all inter-related and that a solution to any one of them requires attention to the others as well. They also recognize that government can only be a part of any real solution to these problems. Business firms, banks, labor unions, neighborhood groups, non-profit organizations, churches and other local organizations must join together with government in new partnerships if progress is to be made. Thus in Providence, as in other cities, a holistic approach to community rebuilding has begun, focusing on the many inter-related sources of urban poverty and decay, while utilizing newly developed partnerships that link together many different public and private organizations. In a real sense, we are reinventing our community.

Nowhere has the process of reinvention been more apparent than in the deliberations of the 12 Community Task Forces established to develop a strategic plan for the City of Providence. At an initial community workshop, participants were asked to identify the characteristics and attributes they would use to describe a more livable Providence in the year 2010. Participants were then asked to prioritize these attributes, emphasizing those characteristics they felt *most* important for making Providence a more livable city in the year 2010. Subsequent task force meetings extended these discussions and refined our collective vision for Providence, including an assessment of where we stand today in several substantive areas, as well as an assessment of the most pressing needs facing Providence in each of those areas. From these discussions it is clear that four characteristics are especially important to workshop participants as critical factors in enhancing the quality of life for all who live, work, and play in Providence.

1. Education. Task force participants were nearly unanimous in their recognition of the importance of the community's educational system and of the need for an expanded vision of the responsibilities of that system. Nine out of twelve community task forces designated education as one of the most important attributes of a livable city. Participants in several task forces pointed out the importance of having good schools. As one task force member noted, "People move to a community because of the quality of its schools; they also move out when the quality of the schools deteriorates." To improve school quality participants emphasized stronger parental involvement, incentives for children to remain in school ("no drop outs"), higher expectations for student performance, and the need to recognize cultural diversity in our schools and in our neighborhoods. Of equal importance, task force participants also acknowledged the desirability of broadening our vision of education beyond the elementary and secondary grades. In addition to conventional higher education alternatives, task force participants pointed out the significance of promoting life-long learning, with options such as adult education, literacy and language programs, and worker training and retraining. From this point of view, schools are not just for kids; they should become recognized as neighborhood and community resource centers.

2. Economic Base. Next to education, community task force participants noted the importance of establishing a strong economic base as an important component of a livable city. Six of the twelve task forces cited the economy or the city's economic base as a key priority for Providence. Nearly all of these task forces cited good jobs with good wages as evidence of a strong economic base and most cited a need for greater job creation in the private sector. Many participants also pointed out the importance of small business and fostering a greater entrepreneurial spirit in the City. Participants in several task forces noted that the City's arts and entertainment, cultural institutions, colleges and universities, and historic character were major assets whose economic impacts need further development. As one participant said, "Providence would be a ghost city without arts and culture."

3. Civic Culture. Four of the twelve community task forces suggested that improving the civic culture of the city was important in making Providence a more livable place. Among the qualities noted were a greater sense of civic pride, in Providence and in one's neighborhood, a greater sense of volunteerism, increased citizen participation, and a greater personal involvement, particularly among parents of school children. Many task force participants also noted the importance of having good public, private and nonprofit leaders, with long term objectives and a commitment to leading the community toward those objectives. Participants also pointed out a need for greater diversity in leadership positions, particularly in state and city government. Finally, several task force participants spoke of a need to reconsider current systems of governance, with a view toward reform, reorganization, greater scrutiny of expenditures, and a more inclusive decision-making process.

4. Urban Fabric. Three of the twelve community task forces identified the urban fabric as a key ingredient for a more livable Providence in the year 2010. Many cited the importance of the physical city and its impact on social and economic relationships within the city. Adequate and affordable housing, for example, simultaneously anchors the physical appearance of city neighborhoods and provides the base from which city residents can find employment. Conversely, large numbers of abandoned housing units can undermine neighborhood stability and weaken the linkage between employment and residence. Thus for many participants, already living in a city of strong neighborhood identification, stable and safe residential neighborhoods remain an essential quality of a more livable city in the year 2010. For many other participants, the city's rich historic heritage and the distinctive character of historic buildings adds a flavor to the urban fabric of Providence that should also be retained in the next century. In addition to these ideas, there were three themes that were predominant under the urban fabric heading:

1. **Transit** More than half of the task forces noted a need for improved mass transit that provides all residents with greater accessibility to work, services, and recreational opportunities.
2. **Parking** Several participants noted that a livable city includes one that provides a variety of low-cost parking options in downtown Providence aswell as expanded parking options in neighborhood commercial districts. Nearly half of the task forces cited ample and cheap parking downtown as a key feature of a livable city.
3. **Environment and Open Space** More than half the task forces proposed that a livable city is an open and green city. Participants noted that in order to make Providence more livable, greater sensitivity to the environment is needed, including an emphasis on more greenspace in the city and improved access to the city's waterfront: rivers, ponds, harbor and Narragansett Bay. Several task force members also noted that a livable city is a clean city, free from trash, litter, and other forms of environmental pollution.

The vision of a livable Providence in the year 2010 that emerges from twelve citizen task forces is an image of a city with excellent schools, good jobs at good wages, a participatory civic culture, and an urban fabric that rests on safe, stable and well-maintained neighborhoods, linked together by good public transportation, and linked to downtown by both public transit and adequate private parking. That the city does not yet enjoy all of these

qualities is less important than the fact that several hundred citizens of Providence achieved a broad agreement that these are the qualities that most need to be pursued in the future. It is also important to note that this considerable consensus was not achieved overnight, nor was it the product of some arcane research process designed to replace real disagreement with artificial consensus. This vision of Providence in the year 2010 *emerged,* and it emerged through long, repeated, and often heated discussions among citizens who voluntarily participated in a serious effort to shape the city's future.

It is both important and instructive to compare this vision of the city's priorities, enunciated during the Spring of 1994, with the priorities offered in the Spring of 1992 by Mayor Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. In offering The Providence Plan in April of 1992, the Mayor listed six major goals: put people to work, retain the city's middle class, make our neighborhoods safe and livable, prepare today's children for tomorrow's jobs, provide decent and affordable housing, and increase jobs and taxes in downtown Providence. Although the Mayor's plan was developed by a staff of professional policy experts rather than ordinary citizens, the similarities between his plan and the views of the twelve citizen task forces are quite striking. Both emphasize the critical significance of jobs, education, strong and safe neighborhoods, and housing. In 1994, citizen task forces gave more emphasis to the civic culture and the urban fabric than the Mayor did in 1992, and the Mayor gave more emphasis to downtown Providence than did the citizen task forces. These differences aside, however, the articulated priorities of the Mayor are very close to the priorities that emerged among Providence citizens in 1994. In short, both citizens of Providence and their Mayor agree on major priorities for the City's future. That is a fact of no small political importance.

In addition, the priorities that have emerged out of the *ProVision* community-based strategic planning process are remarkably consistent with those enunciated in Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan, which was adopted last year by the City Plan Commission and the City Council. According to the comprehensive plan:

> "[O]ur desire for Providence is not just for a good city, but a great city; that we are craving not just a stable economy, but a dynamic economic climate that offers investment and employment opportunity to all of its citizens. The citizens of Providence demand neighborhoods that are not just good, but neighborhoods that are vital parts of the city, free of blight and crime, great places to live. These are aspirations for greatness, aspirations that can be achieved. This is how great cities come into being."

Thus, *ProVision* has demonstrated that there is a great deal of consensus in Providence regarding the key attributes of a livable community and the assets the city has to build on to fulfill that vision: its scale and size, its natural environment and historic buildings, its cultural and educational insititutions, its neighborhoods, and most important, its diverse population.

Key Strategic Initiatives

To promote this vision of a livable Providence in the year 2010, we are commited to pursuing the following key strategic initiatives:

1. Economic Self Sufficiency Through Supportive Work Initiatives. We must find new ways to foster and expand innovative approaches to help dependent families and individuals overcome barriers to employment and attain economic self-sufficiency. Our efforts here will build off of the state's Pathways to Independence program, administered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Serivces; Critical Needs/Collaborative Solutions, a public private partnership between the United Way of Southeastern New England and the Human Resources Investment Council; and an expanded version of Critical Needs/Collaborative Solutions that includes

the Rhode Island Hospital, Women and Infants Hospital, the Rhode Island Foundation, The Providence Plan, and the city of Providence as additional partners. These efforts will focus on developing and supporting formal partnerships and collaboratives that will deliver a comprehensive set of services to families and individuals over a three- to five-year period that will enable them to make the transition from dependency to economic self-sufficiency. These services will include job readiness training, skill training, case management, mentoring, and family support, job placement, and support services, including transportation, child care, health care, and housing assistance.

2. Foster a Stronger Link between Schools, Employment and Training Programs, and the Business Community. *ProVision* participants expressed strong support for strengthening the school-to-work transition, acknowledging the need and importance of establishing stronger and more direct ties between our secondary schools, employment and training programs, and private employers.

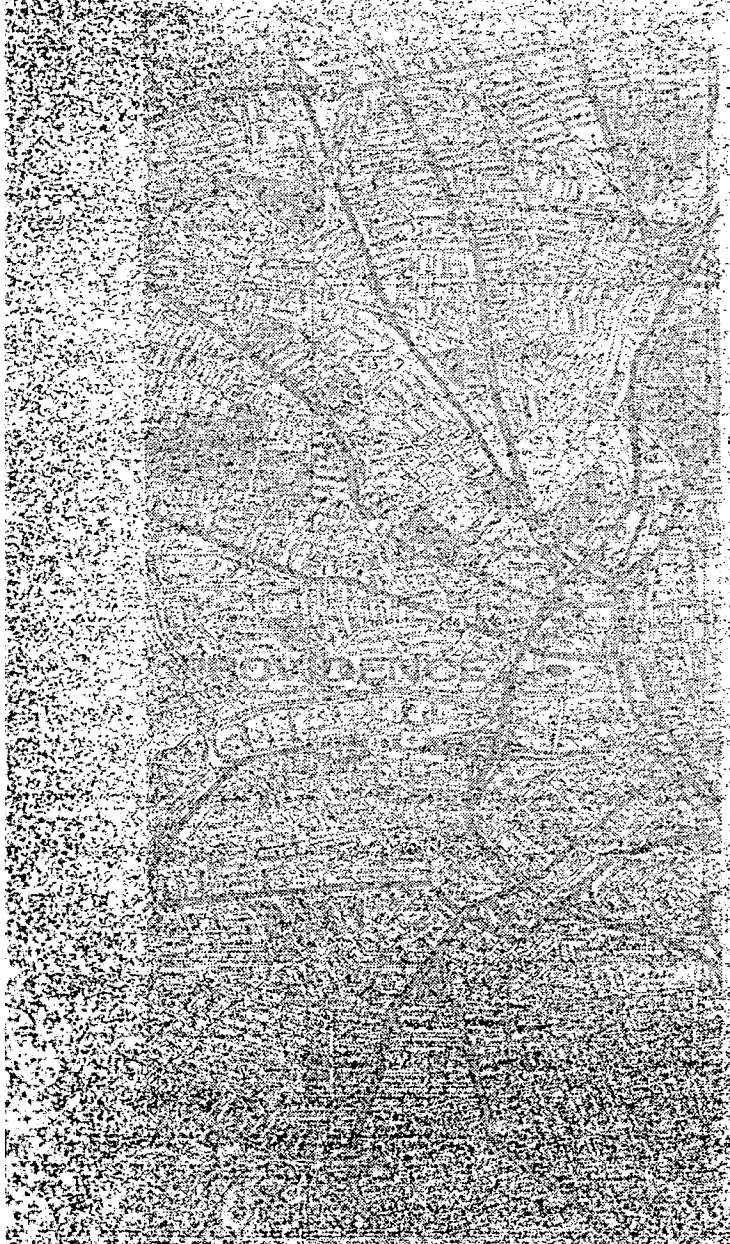
3. Foster a Stronger Link between Schools and the Community. In addition, we must also establish stronger ties between our schools and the children who attend them, and the families they depend upon for nurture and support. *ProVision* participants are commited to the concept of Child Opportunity Zones being advanced by the Rhode Island Department of Education, the United Way, and The Rhode Island Foundation, among others. We must build upon the experience gained at the William D'Abate Elementary School, which has completed a year of planning, and begin exploring other models of the COZ concept in additional elementary schools throughout the city. In addition, we must develop new methods for promoting greater parental and community involvement and ownership in local schools and begin exploring how the COZ concept might advance these concerns. The recent announcement of the Coalition of independent hospitals and universities to provide a variety of health and education services is an important asset and opportunity for the Providence community.

4. Promote Small Business Development. ProVision participants acknowledged the fact that we must begin to make a greater effort to grow our own jobs. This can be accomplished by increasing the amount of funds available for micro lending and revolving loan funds to assist the creation and expansion of small businesses, with an emphasis on neighborhood economic development. Often, small start-up businesses experience the greatest difficulty in gaining access to conventional credit markets. In addition, we must make a greater effort to market our neighborhoods as locations for business opportunties and do a better job of coordinating these efforts with small business technical assistance programs and the use of physical development programs to explore new ways of developing small business incubators.

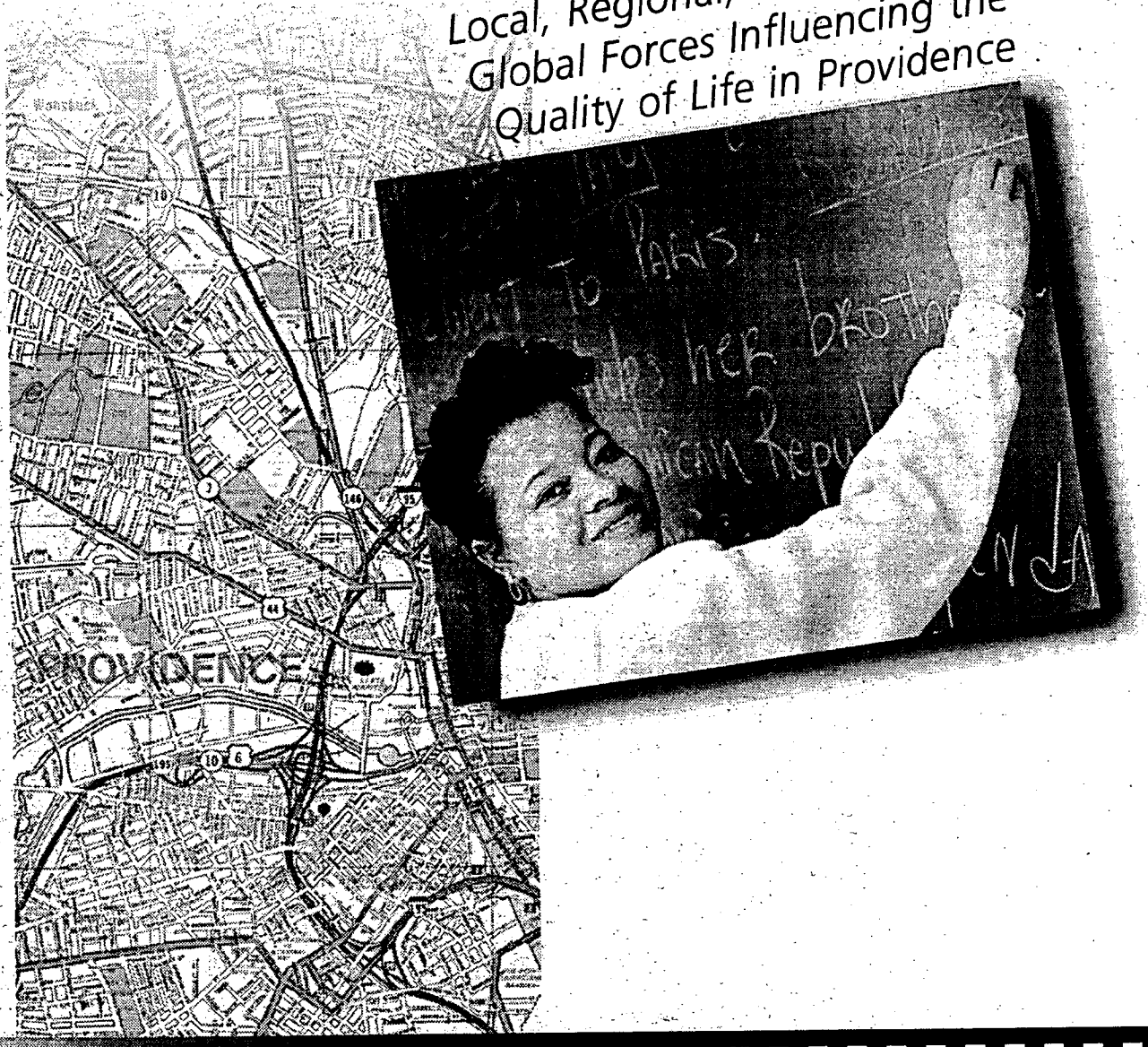
5. Address the Problems of Blight and Abandonment. The impacts of the recession and the banking crisis have left a visible imprint on the city and its neighborhoods. Commercial and residential blight and abandonment is rampant in some neighborhoods. Rather than dwell on the deficits of abandonment and disinvestment, ProVision participants view the number of vacant and abandoned buildings as an opportunity for new development, particularly as it regards the formulation of an incubator building strategy to promote small business development in neighborhoods. However, in order to avoid the failures of previous business incubator strategies in Providence and in other old industrial cities, we must make a greater effort to incorporate a broader array of clients in incubator buildings (e.g., child care and human service providers) than the more traditional high technology approach, and we must do a better job of linking small business loan and technical assistance programs to incubator buildings.

6. Expand Housing Opportunties. Despite the significant commitment Providence and Rhode Island have shown towards meeting the housing needs of low- and moderate-income families and individuals, and the wide array of public, private, and nonprofit housing organizations active in Providence, *ProVision* participants felt it imperative that Providence continue to pursue a housing policy that relies on a continuum of housing choices for all citizens, and one that provides a clear path of assistance from homelessness to home ownership.

Part II Needs Assessment and Environmental Scan



Local, Regional, National, and Global Forces Influencing the Quality of Life in Providence



Chapter 4
Local, Regional, National and Global Forces Influencing the Quality of Life in Providence

Introduction and Overview

Founded by Roger Williams in 1636, Providence was one of the first cities developed in America. It is a city with a rich historic and cultural heritage. By the end of the American Revolution, the Olneyville section of Providence was the location of a forge and foundry and various other minor industries. Providence experienced its most rapid industrial growth during the middle part of the 19th century and was one of the nation's leading cities during the industrial revolution era. During this period, numerous factories and mills were built along the banks of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers, which in turn stimulated the development of nearby residential areas. By 1890, Providence had emerged as the nation's leading producer of wool and worsted goods.

Providence's growth and transformation from a small shipping town to the major economic center of the most industrialized state in the nation was rapid and dramatic. Providence grew in population from 15,000 people to more than 175,000 at the turn of the Twentieth Century. By 1940, the city's population had peaked at more than 250,000, as businesses and industries, continued to migrate to Providence. Over the next forty years, however, people and jobs headed to the suburbs and the south and west regions of the United States. Between 1940 and 1980, Providence saw a significant decrease in population and employment, losing nearly 100,000 residents (39.2% decline).

Today, Providence remains Rhode Island's largest city in addition to serving as the state's capital city. The city's economy is increasingly being driven by the service sector, and as a result, Providence has become the business, medical, educational, cultural, and transportation hub of Southeastern New England. More than 8.5 million people (65% of New England's residents) live within 75 miles of Providence, a total greater than any other 75 mile radius in the United States except for New York City and Philadelphia.

Economic Factors

Like many northeastern cities, Providence has experienced a significant restructuring of its economy since World War II. Between 1948 and 1987, Providence lost more than 36,000 manufacturing jobs, a decline of 60 percent (figure 4-1). Jobs were also lost in other sectors of the city's economy, although the decline was not as sharp as that reported for manufacturing. Retail trade employment declined from 16,258 in 1948 to 11,021 in 1987 (33%) and wholesale trade employment declined from 8,091 in 1948 to 6,923 in 1987 (15%). Employment in the services sector rose sharply during this same period, increasing from 4,168 in 1948 to 16,217 in 1987 (289%), although the number of services jobs added was not large enough to offset the declines recorded in other sectors.

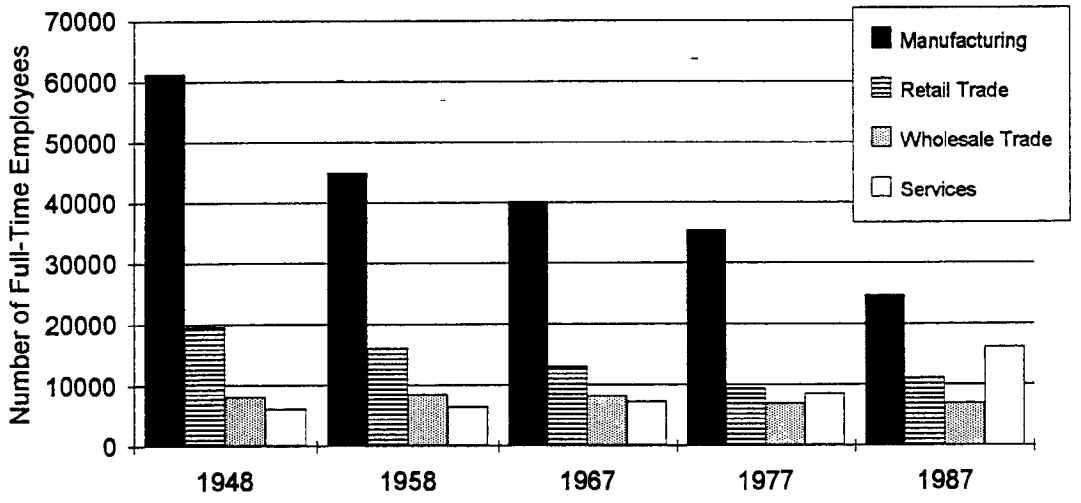
Recently, the city has experienced a pronounced restructuring of its local economy, due largely to the severe impact of the recession has had on the New England region. While the city steadily gained jobs between 1980 and 1988 (a 4.3% increase during this period), more than 13,000 jobs were lost between 1988 and 1992 (a 12.3% decrease) when the effects of the recession and the state's banking crisis were particularly pronounced (table 4-1).

As a result of these changes, the Providence economy in the 1990s is very different from the city's economic structure in the 1940s. In 1948, Providence was known primarily as an industrial city where manufacturing accounted for more than two out of three jobs in the city. As recently as 1980 manufacturing was still the leading employment sector in the city's economy. In 1992, less than one out of five jobs in the city were in manufacturing, and there were nearly three times as many jobs in the services sector than in manufacturing (48,044 versus 17,445). As figures 4-2 indicates, Providence's economy today is largely driven by the services sector, with services employment concentrated primarily in the areas of health care, education, banking and insurance, and business services. Thus, Providence has evolved into a city where a substantial portion of the jobs in the city are beyond the reach of its residents, and many of the jobs in the services sector that are held by city residents, tend to be in the low-wage segment of the services sector.

Demographic Factors

The 1990 census reported that 160,728 persons resided in the city of Providence, an increase of 2.5 percent over the number of residents reported in the 1980 census, the city's first increase in population since 1940 (figure 4-3). The city's share of the state's population has steadily declined since 1910, however, dropping from 41.3 percent in 1910 to 16 percent in 1990. The sharpest declined took place between 1950 and 1970 when the city's share of Rhode Island's population declined from 31.4 percent to 18.9 percent. These figures fail, however, to represent the dramatic changes in Providence's internal demographic make-up over the last two decades, a period during which the city's racial and ethnic composition has shifted sharply and the number of families and individuals living below poverty has increased dramatically (table 4-2).

Figure 4-1
Providence Employment by Sector, 1948-1987



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Race and Ethnicity. Providence has become one of the most racially and ethnical diverse cities in the United States. Unlike most cities which contain one or two dominant minority groups, Providence is home to a sizable population of black, Hispanic, and Asian residents. Between 1980 and 1990 the white population of Providence declined by about 12 percent. Nonwhite population increased by 64 percent. The largest increases in the nonwhite population were recorded for Asians and Pacific Islanders (464%) and Hispanics (175%). The black population increased by 28 percent during this same period. According to the 1990 census, 15.5 percent of Providence residents were Hispanic, 14.8 percent were black, 5.9 percent were Asian or Pacific Islander, and about 1 percent were American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut.

Foreign Born Population. Providence has also become a frequent destination for new immigrants, According to the 1990 census, almost one in five Providence residents was foreign born. This number increased by 49 percent between 1980 and 1990 and has nearly doubled in the last twenty years, rising from 18,321 in 1970 to 31,532 in 1990 (73% increase). As a result, 24 percent of the city's population spoke English "not well" or "not at all." according the the 1990 census. The major countries of origin of the city's foreign born population include:

Place of Birth	*Number*	*Place of Birth*	*Number*
Dominican Republic	5,572	Italy	1,759
Portugal	2,788	China	724
Cambodia	2,261	Canada	671
Guatemala	2,250	Soviet Union	659
Laos	2,064	Thailand	616

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population.

Age. In 1990, the median age of the Providence population was 29.4 years, a slight decline from 1980 when the median age of the city's population was 29.9 years. The fastest growing age category over the past decade was persons under five years of age, which recorded a 27 percent increase between 1980 and 1990. The second fastest growing segment of the city's population was persons between the ages of 35 and 54 years, which increased by 17 percent between 1980 and 1990. The age category that reported the sharpest decline was persons between the ages of 55 and 64, which declined by 32 percent over the past decade. The number of persons between the ages of 65 and 74 declined by 17 percent during this same period.

Households and Family Type. The number of households declined by about 2 percent over the past decade, dropping from 60,157 in 1980 to 58,905 in 1990. However, since the city's population increased during this period, the average household size also increased, rising from 2.61 in 1980 to 2.73 in 1990. The number of families declined by about 5 percent between 1980 and 1990, although the number of families with children increased by 2 percent. Female-headed families with children increased by 15 percent over the past decade, rising from 5,901 in 1980 to 6,805 in 1990.

Births. According to the Rhode Island Department of Health, there were 3,245 births in the city of Providence in 1990. Nearly half of these births, 1,646, were births out of wedlock. About one in six (572) births recorded in Providence in 1990 was to a teen and 85 percent of these were births out of wedlock. About 8 percent of all births to Providence mothers in 1990 were low-birth weight births; 700 births were to mothers who had late or no prenatal care.

Income and Poverty Status: According to the 1990 census, the median family income for Providence residents was $28,342, 28 percent lower than the median family income reported for the state ($39,172). In constant dollars, this represented an increase of 15.9 percent citywide over 1980. A decade earlier, median family income in Providence was only 17.4 percent below the statewide median.

Table 4-1
Providence Average Annual Employment by Sector, 1980-1992

Short Title	Average Employment by Year					1980-1988		1988-1992		1980-1992	
	1980	1985	1988	1990	1992	Net	Percent	Net	Percent	Net	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries											
Agricultural services	46	63	100	100	(d)	54	117.4	--	--	54	117.4
Contract Construction											
General Building Contractors	397	470	741	365	291	344	86.6	-450	-60.7	-32	-8.1
Heavy Construction, Except Buildings	59	117	43	202	224	-16	-27.1	181	420.9	143	242.4
Special Trade Contractors	1,095	1,424	1,939	1,049	868	844	77.1	-1,071	-55.2	-46	-4.2
Total	1,551	2,011	2,723	1,616	1,383	1,172	75.6	-1,340	-49.2	65	4.2
Manufacturing											
Food and Kindred Products	565	587	522	512	535	-43	-7.6	13	2.5	-53	-9.4
Textile Mill Products	1,085	479	456	258	163	-629	-58.0	-293	-64.3	-827	-76.2
Apparel and other Textile Products	137	98	58	23	67	-79	-57.7	9	15.5	-114	-83.2
Lumber & Wood Products	0	65	73	32	41	73	--	-32	-43.8	32	--
Furniture & Fixtures	258	229	339	306	308	81	31.4	-31	-9.1	48	18.6
Paper and Allied Products	651	633	551	536	409	-100	-15.4	-142	-25.8	-115	-17.7
Printing and Publishing	2,980	3,312	3,494	3,021	2,545	514	17.2	-949	-27.2	41	1.4
Chemicals and Allied Products	157	197	191	124	91	34	21.7	-100	-52.4	-33	-21.0
Rubber and Miscellaneous Plastics Products	1,442	1,186	1,153	674	565	-289	-20.0	-588	-51.0	-768	-53.3
Leather and Leather Products	795	508	589	398	310	-206	-25.9	-279	-47.4	-397	-49.9
Stone, Clay & Glass Products	98	59	63	42	8	-35	-35.7	-55	-87.3	-56	-57.1
Primary Metal Industries	674	458	400	613	501	-274	-40.7	101	25.3	-61	-9.1
Fabricated Metal Products	3,991	3,326	2,864	2,528	1,936	-1,127	-28.2	-928	-32.4	-1,463	-36.7
Machinery, Except Electrical	978	679	626	611	523	-352	-36.0	-103	-16.5	-367	-37.5
Electric and Electronic Equipment	2,379	1,732	1,034	635	429	-1,345	-56.5	-605	-58.5	-1,744	-73.3
Instruments and Related Products	1,688	945	804	782	583	-884	-52.4	-221	-27.5	-906	-53.7
Miscellaneous Manufacturing Industries*	16,347	13,729	11,638	9,851	8,492	-4,709	-28.8	-3,146	-27.0	-6,496	-39.7
Total	34,225	28,222	24,855	20,946	17,506	-9,370	-27.4	-7,349	-29.6	-13,279	-38.8
Transportation & Public Utilities											
Local and Interurban Transportation	305	293	319	428	189	14	4.6	-130	-40.8	123	40.3
Trucking and Warehousing	659	610	752	541	222	93	14.1	-530	-70.5	-118	-17.9
Water Transportation	157	233	308	189	114	151	96.2	-194	-63.0	32	20.4
Air Transportation	0	0	0	173	(d)	0	--	--	--	173	--
Transportation Services	242	304	377	269	198	135	55.8	-179	-47.5	27	11.2
Communicatons	2,159	2,487	2,595	1,144	2,201	436	20.2	-394	-15.2	-1,015	-47.0
Electric, Gas and Sanitary Services	1,621	1,233	1,423	1,795	1,272	-198	-12.2	-151	-10.6	174	10.7
Total	5,143	5,160	5,774	4,539	4,196	631	12.3	-1,578	-27.3	-604	-11.7
Wholesale Trade											
Wholesale Durable Goods	3,670	3,779	3,948	3,455	2,882	278	7.6	-1,066	-27.0	-215	-5.9
Wholesale Nondurable Goods	2,653	2,185	1,807	1,664	1,396	-846	-31.9	-411	-22.7	-989	-37.3
Total	6,323	5,964	5,755	5,119	4,278	-568	-9.0	-1,477	-25.7	-1,204	-19.0

Short Title	Average Employment by Year					1980-1988		1988-1992		1980-1992	
	1980	1985	1988	1990	1992	Net	Percent	Net	Percent	Net	Percent
Retail Trade											
Building Materials and Garden Supplies	352	327	366	282	188	14	4.0	-178	-48.6	-70	-19.9
General Merchandise Stores	1,213	862	840	37	428	-373	-30.8	-412	-49.0	-1,176	-96.9
Food Stores	1,704	1,791	1,799	962	1,427	95	5.6	-372	-20.7	-742	-43.5
Automotive Dealers & Service Stations	936	1,067	1,068	1,103	786	132	14.1	-282	-26.4	167	17.8
Apparel & Accessories Stores	991	969	943	481	374	-48	-4.8	-569	-60.3	-510	-51.5
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	614	611	582	544	553	-32	-5.2	-29	-5.0	-70	-11.4
Eating & Drinking Places	3,205	4,298	4,626	3,532	3,686	1,421	44.3	-940	-20.3	327	10.2
Miscellaneous Retail	2,062	1,940	1,864	1,486	1,447	-198	-9.6	-417	-22.4	-576	-27.9
Total	11,077	11,865	12,088	8,427	8,889	1,011	9.1	-3,199	-26.5	-2,650	-23.9
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate											
Depository Institutions	6,502	4,924	5,593	5,020	3,903	-909	-14.0	-1,690	-30.2	-1,482	-22.8
Non Depository Institutions	574	1,123	474	600	826	-100	-17.4	352	74.3	26	4.5
Security & Commodity Brokers	319	675	732	690	680	413	129.5	-52	-7.1	371	116.3
Insurance Carriers	3,890	4,166	4,216	4,087	3,693	326	8.4	-523	-12.4	197	5.1
Insurance Agents, Brokers & Service	704	687	777	869	614	73	10.4	-163	-21.0	165	23.4
Real Estate	665	798	970	1,019	912	305	45.9	-58	-6.0	354	53.2
Holding & Other Investment Companies	87	136	193	777	718	106	121.8	525	272.0	690	793.1
Total	12,741	12,509	12,955	13,062	11,346	214	1.7	-1,609	-12.4	321	2.5
Services											
Hotel & Other Lodging Places	806	733	845	703	648	39	4.8	-197	-23.3	-103	-12.8
Personal Services	867	914	820	808	815	-47	-5.4	-5	-0.6	-59	-6.8
Business Services	4,708	6,326	6,980	6,863	7,954	2,272	48.3	974	14.0	2,155	45.8
Auto Repair Services	634	750	772	859	665	138	21.8	-107	-13.9	225	35.5
Miscellaneous Repair Services	362	411	409	292	248	47	13.0	-161	-39.4	-70	-19.3
Motion Pictures	60	63	104	149	133	44	73.3	29	27.9	89	148.3
Amusement and Recreation	280	289	385	409	354	105	37.5	-31	-8.1	129	46.1
Health Services	12,928	15,069	16,052	18,739	18,257	3,124	24.2	2,205	13.7	5,811	44.9
Legal Services	1,191	1,721	2,108	2,334	2,405	917	77.0	297	14.1	1,143	96.0
Education Services	6,940	8,817	9,279	9,964	10,012	2,339	33.7	733	7.9	3,024	43.6
Social Services	2,009	2,411	2,579	2,713	2,469	570	28.4	-110	-4.3	704	35.0
Membership Organizations	1,551	1,575	1,903	2,266	2,039	352	22.7	136	7.1	715	46.1
Engineering & Management Services	0	0	2,669	2,234	1,911	2,669	--	-758	-28.4	2,234	--
Private Households	119	115	111	108	128	-8	-6.7	17	15.3	-11	-9.2
Other Services	1,312	1,693	0	6	6	-1,312	-100.0	6	--	-1,306	-99.5
Total	33,767	40,887	45,016	48,447	48,044	11,249	33.3	3,028	6.7	14,680	43.5
Other	91	148	197	86	383	106	116.5	186	94.4	-5	-5.5
TOTAL--All Industries	104,964	106,829	109,463	102,342	96,025	4,499	4.3	-13,438	-12.3	-2,622	-2.5

Source: Rhode Island Department of Economic Development, Research Division.

(d) Not shown due to possibility of data being identified with an individual employer.

The number of persons in Providence living in poverty increased in all categories during the past decade. Nearly one in four (23%) of all Providence residents had an income below the poverty level in 1989. About one in five (18.3%) families was living below poverty, the highest rate recorded for the city since the federal government began reporting poverty rates in the 1970 census. A similar proportion of persons aged 65 and older was poor (19%). More than one in three (35%) children in Providence were living below poverty in 1989, which overall, represented nearly half (44%) of all poor children in Rhode Island. According to a recent analysis by the Children's Defense Fund, Providence has the 24th highest poverty rate for children among the nation's 200 largest cities.

Although Providence's share of the state's population has declined to 16 percent, its share of the state's poorest residents has risen sharply (Figure 4-4). In 1990, more than one in three poor persons in Rhode Island resided in the city of Providence and almost half of all poor children in Rhode Island live in Providence. Not only has Providence increased its share of the state's poorest residents, the concentration of poverty within the city's poorest neighborhoods has also risen more sharply than for the rest of the city (figure 4-5). Overall, while the percentage of persons in poverty declined slightly in the city's high poverty census tracts (30 percent or higher) between 1980 and 1990 (from 38.6% to 36.7%), the number of poor persons living in high poverty census tracts increased nearly threefold, rising from 6,351 in 1980 to 17,259 in 1990.

Social and Cultural Factors

Reflecting similar trends in other Northeastern urban areas, Providence is increasingly becoming the home of the segment of the state's population with the greatest needs. As the demographic picture presented above clearly shows, the Providence of the 1990s is a younger and more diverse population than the Providence of a decade ago. At the same time, it is falling behind the rest of the state in terms of income, as poverty rates show an increasing concentration of disadvantaged within the city.

These figures, coupled with the rapid increase in the number of residents with limited English proficiency, have placed an enormous strain on the education and social service systems in Providence. The rate of limited English proficiency in the Providence schools is 18 percent higher that the state average, and 34 percent higher for students receiving free or reduced price lunches. The special needs children continue to place a growing financial burden upon a city whose tax base has been diminishing in real terms for several decades.

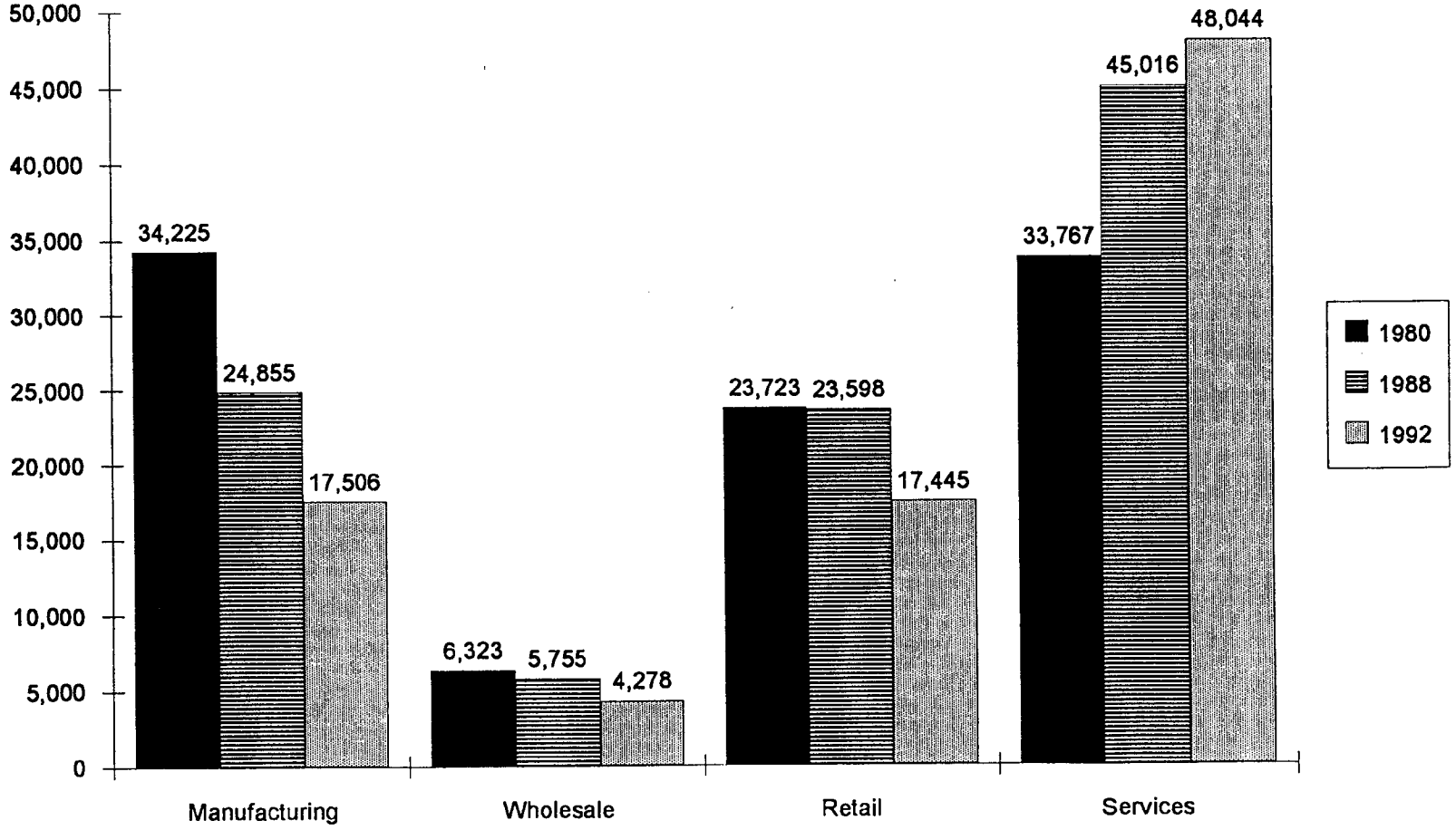
Providence's existing businesses have been slow to adapt to the changing face of its workforce. Although many businesses have indicated satisfaction with foreign-born workers and the skills they bring to the workplace, the extensive need for English proficiency classes and basic workplace literacy training has proven a difficult challenge to meet with existing practices and resources. Only recently have businesses and employment and training programs begun to adapt in order to capitalize on the unique skills of the city's change demography.

Technological Factors

Like many older industrial cities, changes in technology have had a negative impact on Providence. Much of the city's early growth and development was attributed to its natural resources, principally its waterways. The textile industries developed largely because of the availability of cheap water power provided by the city's principal rivers. Location at the head of Narragansett Bay made it convenient for merchants to trade and industrialists to receive raw materials and ship finished products.

However, as new technologies were introduced, making access to water power and transport less critical, Providence's comparative advantage over other locations began to diminish. As noted earlier, the city lost 36,000 manufacturing jobs between 1948 and 1987 as loft factories became obsolescent and many companies either went bankrupt because of their inability to compete or relocated to other locations in order to remain competitive.

Figure 4-2
Providence Employment by Sector, 1980-1992



Legal and Regulatory Factors

As an older city in a small state, Providence often faces more than its share of regulatory and finanacial burdens. Like all urban areas, the flight of the residential and commercial taxpayers to the suburbs has forced the city to increase its tax rates across the board. In a recent survey of Providence businesses completed by the Providence Foundation, over 50 percent of the respondents rated the city's personal property and real estate tax structure as "poor."

Providence does, however, stand to benefit from the statewide effort to restructure the education finance system so that the school funding burden is no longer primarily upon local property taxes. This year, the city will receive an additional $19 million in state aid based on the number of special need students in the district. Finalization of a statewide system of equitable financing should alleviate some the financial burden placed the city by its concentration of children with special needs.

The ease of doing business in the city also continues to be an obstacle for many businesses, including a number of businesses that find the permitting process burdensome both at the city and state level. In a recent survey of more than 100 downtown businesses, 30 percent of the respondents characterized their dealings with city government on permits as poor. This rose to 43 percent for interaction with state government agencies. Recent changes in workers compensation statutes, long cited as prone to abuse, have lowered the cost and difficulty of doing business in the city and state.

Physical and Environmental Factors

Providence riverways, topography and natural beauty have long been admired, but neglect and misguided development have made them a blight upon the city. Until recently, the Woonasquatucket and Moshasuk rivers, which carve scenic waterways through the city, had been lost to pollution and disinterest, and literally covered as the traversed downtown by the widest bridge in the world. Highway development during the 1940s partitioned the city in half (Route 95) and covered another stretch of waterfront along scenic Narragansett Bay (Route 195).

Recent development has sought to recapute this natural beauty. The downtown river relocation and development of river walks and parks have recaptured the natural waterway. The rerouting of I-195 will reincorporate the waterfront of the Providence river into the city. The Woonasquatucket River Greenway project will attempt to revitalize the river as a public space throughout the city over the next few year.

Although recent development has kept a careful eye to restoring the city's physical charm, pollution continues to be a problem. The Providence metropolitan area has been identified as being in serious violation of the Clean Air Act. The pollution problem is a regional one, due to inadequate and underutilized transportation system and negative regional attitude towards mass transit. While responsibility for this problem is shared regionally, regulations and restrictions aimed at curbing pollution, like taxes on garages and parking restrictions, tend place the greatest burden upon city residents and business.

Figure 4-3
Population of Providence and Surrounding Communities, 1940-1990

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	Percent Change 1980-90	Percent Change 1960-90	Percent Change 1940-90
Providence	253,504	248,674	207,498	179,116	156,804	160,728	2.5	-22.5	-36.6
Warwick	28,757	43,028	68,504	83,650	87,123	85,427	-1.9	24.7	197.1
Cranston	47,085	55,060	66,766	74,287	71,992	76,060	5.7	13.9	61.5
Pawtucket	75,797	81,436	81,001	76,984	71,204	72,644	2.0	-10.3	-4.2
East Providence	32,165	35,871	41,955	48,207	50,980	50,380	-1.2	20.1	56.6
North Providence	12,156	13,927	18,220	24,337	29,188	32,090	9.9	76.1	164.0
Johnston	10,672	12,725	17,160	22,037	24,907	26,542	6.6	54.7	148.7
Total	460,136	490,721	501,104	508,618	492,198	503,871	2.4	0.6	9.5
Providence percentage of total population*	55.1	50.7	41.4	35.2	31.9	31.9	0.0	-9.5	-23.2

* Entries in percent change columns indicate percentage point change.

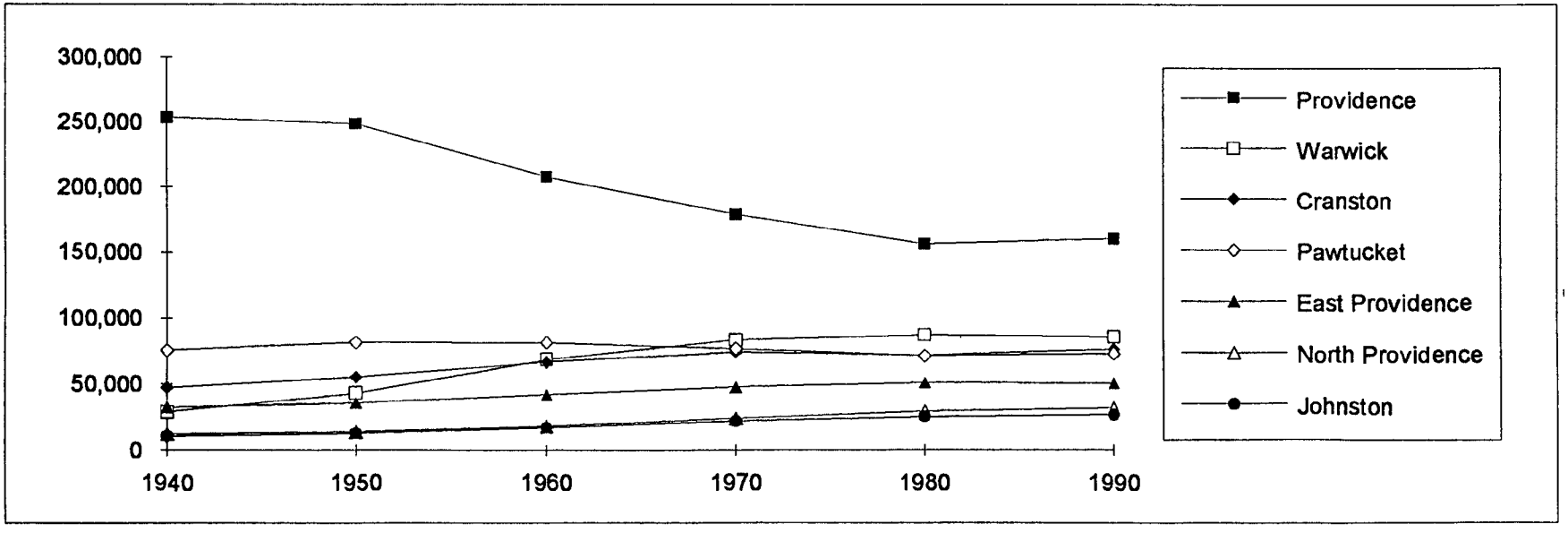


Table 4-2
Selected Characteristics for Providence, 1950-1990

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	Percent Change 1980-90	Percent Change 1970-90	Percent Change 1950-90
POPULATION								
Number of persons	248,674	207,498	179,116	156,804	160,728	2.5	-10.3	-35.4
White	239,993	195,525	161,338	127,320	112,404	-11.7	-30.3	-53.2
Nonwhite	8,681	11,973	17,778	29,484	48,324	63.9	171.8	456.7
Black	8,304	11,153	15,875	18,546	23,828	28.5	50.1	186.9
Hispanic	na	na	na	9,071	24,982	175.4	—	—
Asian and Pacific Islander	na	na	853	1,694	9,547	463.6	—	—
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	na	na	450	1,048	1,495	42.7	—	—
Foreign born persons	38,879	26,018	18,231	21,161	31,532	49.0	73.0	-18.9
*Percent of persons**								
White	96.5	94.2	90.1	81.2	69.9	-11.3	-20.1	-26.6
Nonwhite	3.5	5.8	9.9	18.8	30.1	11.3	20.1	26.6
Black	3.3	5.4	8.9	11.8	14.8	3.0	6.0	11.5
Hispanic	na	na	na	5.8	15.5	9.8	—	—
Asian and Pacific Islander	na	na	0.5	1.1	5.9	4.9	—	—
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	na	na	0.3	0.7	0.9	0.3	—	—
Foreign born persons	15.6	12.5	10.2	13.5	19.6	6.1	9.4	4.0
HOUSEHOLDS								
Households	72,349	67,982	63,148	60,157	58,905	-2.1	-6.7	-18.6
Families	63,475	53,520	44,773	36,726	35,025	-4.6	-21.8	-44.8
Families with children	na	26,832	20,487	17,098	17,459	2.1	-14.8	—
Female-headed families	na	na	8,306	9,703	10,842	11.7	30.5	—
With children	na	na	4,010	5,901	6,805	15.3	69.7	—
EDUCATION								
Percent high school graduate*	31.4	32.7	40.6	53.4	62.8	9.4	22.2	31.4
Percent college graduate*	6.1	6.8	9.7	15.7	21.6	6.0	11.9	15.6
EMPLOYMENT								
Civilian labor force	108,958	85,410	77,838	72,418	76,208	5.2	-2.1	-30.1
Employed	98,695	80,185	74,404	65,786	69,200	5.2	-7.0	-29.9
Unemployed	10,263	5,217	3,434	6,632	7,008	5.7	104.1	-31.7
Percent*	9.4	6.1	4.4	9.2	9.2	0.0	4.8	-0.2
INCOME AND POVERTY								
Median family income	2,950	5,069	8,430	14,948	28,342	89.6	236.2	860.7
Per capita income	na	1,817	3,110	6,169	11,838	91.9	—	—
Persons below poverty	na	na	32,260	29,941	34,120	14.0	5.8	—
Percent*	na	na	18.6	20.4	23.0	2.6	4.4	—
Families below poverty	na	na	6,012	5,703	6,461	13.3	7.5	—
Percent*	na	na	13.3	15.3	18.3	3.0	5.0	—
HOUSING								
Total housing units	74,212	73,027	68,163	67,535	66,794	-1.1	-2.0	-10.0
Total occupied housing units	72,259	67,982	63,148	60,157	58,905	-2.1	-6.7	-18.5
Owner-occupied	22,902	23,821	22,632	22,189	21,296	-4.0	-5.9	-7.0
Percent*	31.7	35.0	35.8	36.9	36.2	-0.7	0.3	4.5
Renter-occupied	49,357	44,161	40,516	37,968	37,609	-0.9	-7.2	-23.8
Percent*	68.3	65.0	64.2	63.1	63.8	0.7	-0.3	-4.5
Vacant housing units	1,016	3,611	4,984	7,338	7,889	7.5	58.3	676.5
Median value (thousands)	11	12	17	38	113	197.4	564.7	927.3
Median rent	27	40	60	139	386	177.7	543.3	1345.7

na = not available

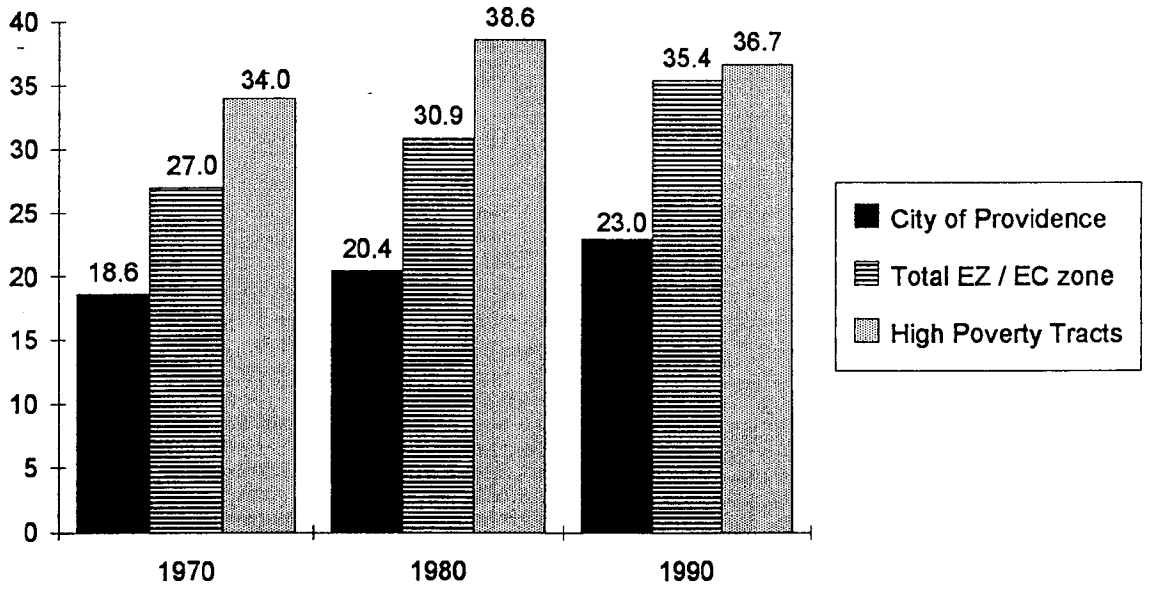
* Entries in percent change column indicate percentage point change.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing.

Figure 4-4
Providence Share of State Demographics, 1970-1990

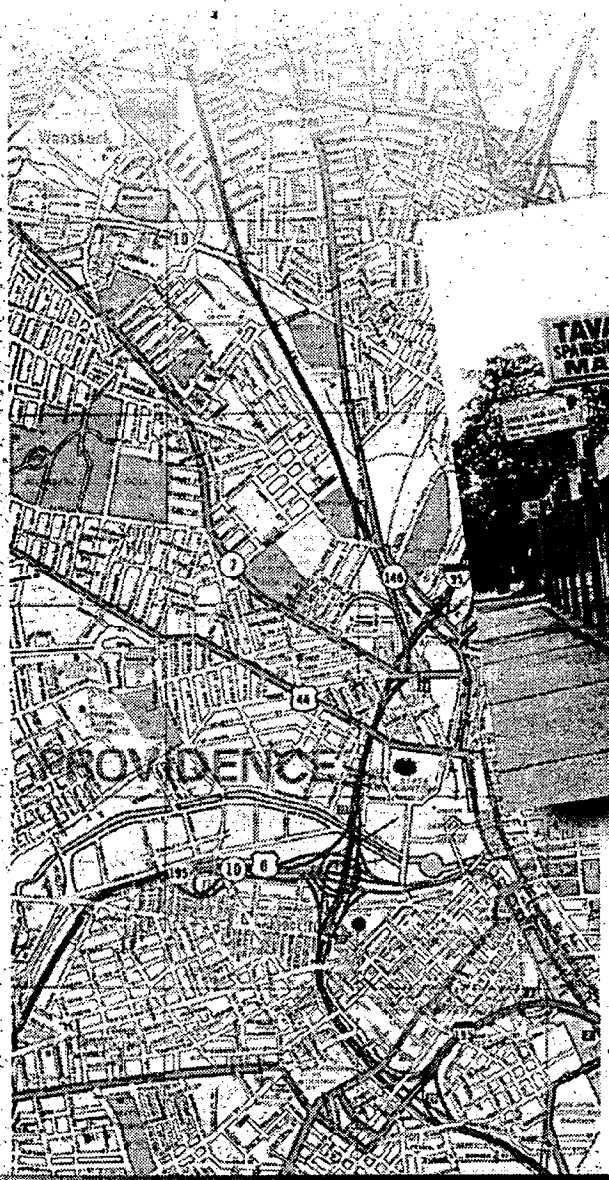
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

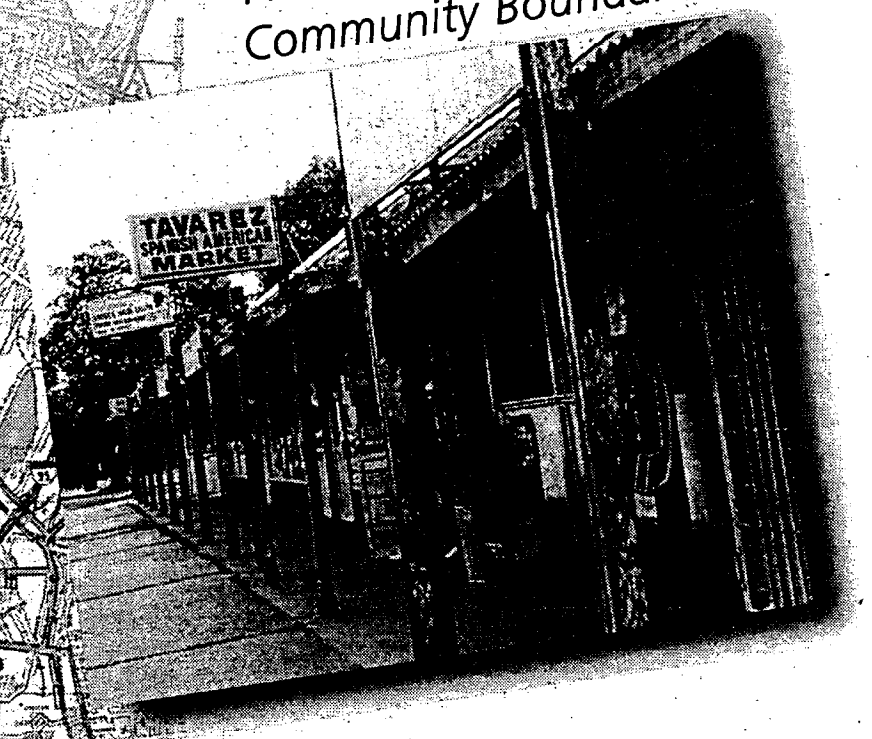
Figure 4-5
Percent of Persons Below Poverty, 1970-1990



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Providence's Enterprise Community Boundaries





Chapter 5
Description of Nominated Area for Enterprise Community

Introduction and Overview

According to federal guidelines, the maximum population that may be included in Providence's Enterprise Community is 50,000. The area designated must include complete census tracts and may contain no more than three noncontiguous parcels. In addition, the area nominated for federal Enterprise Community designation must meet the following pervasive poverty and distress criteria:

1. Must suffer from pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress;
2. Must have a poverty rate at or above:

    20 % for each census tract;

    25% in at least 90% of the census tracts;

    35% in at least 50% of the census tracts.

If the nominated area consists of two or three noncontiguous parcels, each parcel must independently meet the poverty rate thresholds listed above.

Map 5-1 illustrates the area proposed for designation as an Enterprise Community in Providence. The lighter shaded census tracts represent the census tracts included within the Enterprise Community boundaries. The darker shaded areas represent the boundaries of the Providence Plan Housing Corporation's Focus Areas for its Neighborhood Turn Around program. Under this program, the PPHC works with community-based organizations in an effort to concentrate on recycling vacant and abandoned housing and making affordable home repair and home purchase loans available to income-eligible Providence residents. Additional maps display the percentage of persons with income below the poverty level (map 5-2), the percentage of persons unemployed (map 5-3), and the percent nonwhite (map 5-4) for Providence census tracts based on the 1990 census.

The proposed area nominated for Enterprise Community designation includes a total population of 48,758 (30.3% of the city) and includes portions of 11 of the city's 15 wards. The proposed area includes thirteen census tracts: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 19, 26, 27, and 30. All census tracts in Providence with a poverty rate of 35 percent or higher have been included within the Enterprise Community boundary except for census tract 36, which was excluded because its poverty rate is skewed by a large number of college students. While 38.8 percent of the persons in census tract 36 had incomes below the poverty level in 1989, only 3.9 percent of the families in that census tract were poor according to the 1990 census.

Four census tracts in the second tier (poverty rates between 25% and 34%) are included in the proposed Enterprise Community area (census tracts 2, 5, 6, and 27).

- **Census tract 2** (Elmwood) includes two focus areas that are part of the Providence Plan Housing Corporation's Neighborhood Turn Around program, has a high level of community involvement and nonprofit activity, and includes portions of a major commercial corridor (Broad Street) that could be a key asset in promoting neighborhood economic development.
- **Census tracts 5 and 6** (South Providence) have high levels of unemployment and many key community assets. Census tract 5 has the highest unemployment rate (23.8%) in the city according to the 1990 census and includes the site of Mandela Woods, a 136-unit family housing complex that also includes a community center that is being developed by a joint venture between two local community-based housing organizations. Census tract 6 includes the site of the future Career and Technical School. Both census tracts have the potential to tie in housing, job training, and economic development, particularly given their proximity to Rhode Island and Women and Infants' Hospitals, the Community College of Rhode Island, and the career and technical school.
- **Census tract 27** includes the Chad Brown family housing development, which is closely linked to census tract 26 and the Smith Hill neighborhood. This tract has the fourth highest unemployment rate (15.3%) in the city and also includes most of the PPHC's Eagle Park Focus Area. There is also the potential to tie in economic development/job creation activities with the Silver Spring Industrial Park.

Characteristics of the Nominated Area

As Table 5-1 demonstrates, the area nominated for the Enterprise Community boundary includes the most distressed neighborhoods in the city. While about one out of three Providence residents live within the borders of the Enterprise Community, the area includes a disproportionate number of the city's high needs residents and is an area of generally high physical distress. The Enterprise Community zone includes:

⇒ 45.5% of the city's foreign born population in 1990

⇒ 60.1% of persons in 1990 who spoke English not well or not at all

⇒ 51.3% of all low-weight births in 1989

⇒ 56.8% of all births in 1989 with late or no prenatal care

⇒ 67.4% of all births in 1989 to teens

⇒ 51.8% of all high school dropouts in 1992

⇒ An unemployment rate in 1990 nearly 1½ times the citywide rate

⇒ A median family income less than 60% the citywide median

⇒ 48.6% of all persons below poverty in 1989

⇒ 50.3% of all subsidized housing units

⇒ 74.8% of all scattered site subsidized housing units

⇒ 67.9% of all vacant properties

⇒ 46.7% of all incendiary fires

All but one of the ten census tracts identified as severely distressed neighborhoods by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as part of their national KIDS COUNT project are included in Providence's Enterprise Community. The Casey Foundation identified their distressed neighborhoods as census tracts with at least four of the five

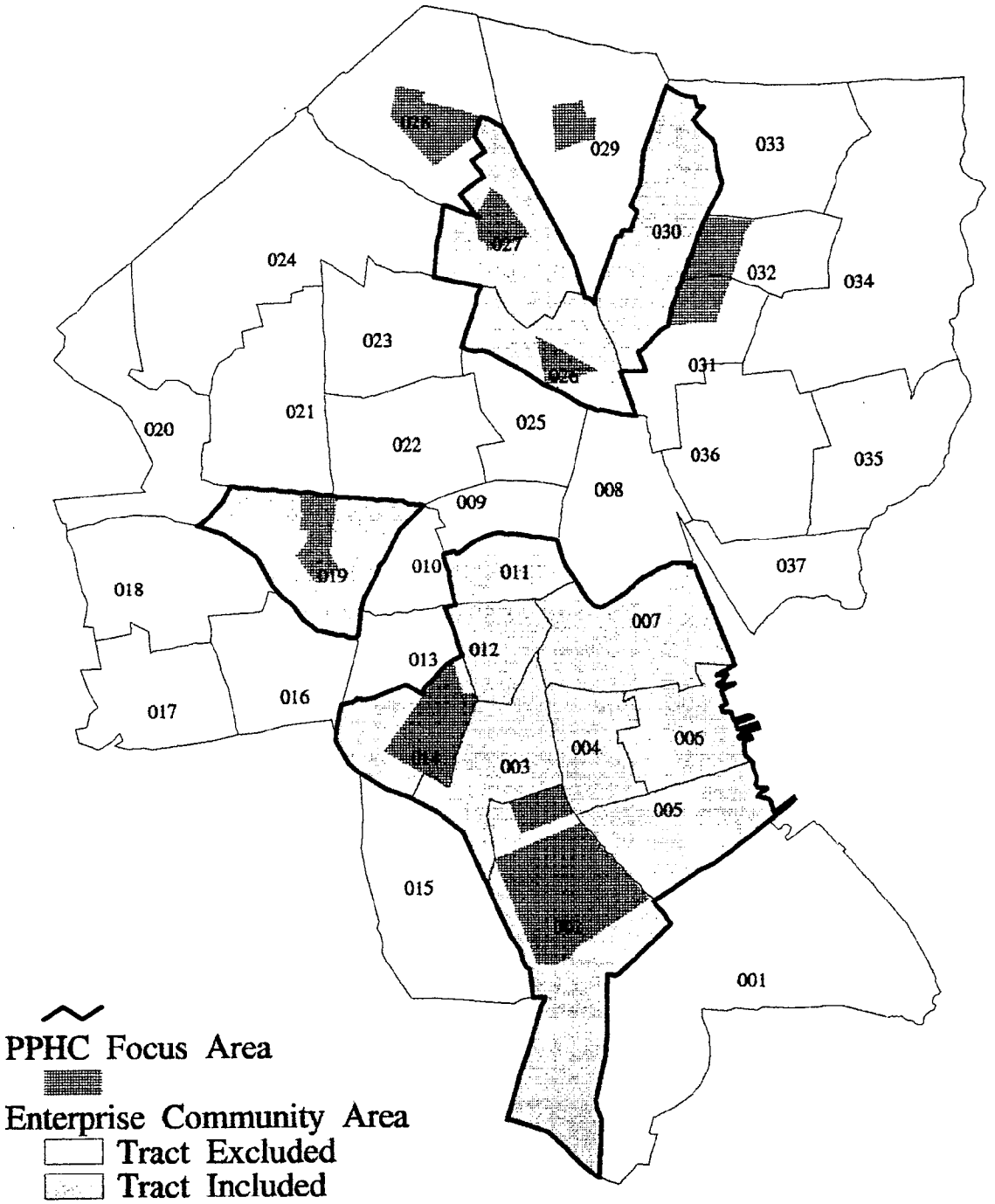
following characteristics: high poverty rate (above 27.5%), high percentage of female-headed families (above 39.6%), high percentage of high school dropouts (above 23.3%), high percentage of adult males unattached to the labor force (above 46.5%), and high percentage of families receiving public assistance (above 17%). "High percent" was defined by the Casey Foundation as more than one standard deviation above the national mean for all census tracts. The only census tract in Providence designated by the Casey Foundation as a severely distressed neighborhood that was not included in Providence's Enterprise Community boundary is census tract 10 (Federal Hill). Instead, we have opted to include census tract 11, also located in Federal Hill and adjacent to census tract 10 because of its more serious physical distress, and the extent of housing reinvestment that has occurred in that census tract over the past couple of years (it is the one of the city's sites for its Nehemiah housing program).

While the census tracts proposed for Providence's Enterprise Community include a substantial proportion of the city's most distressed areas, they also contain many of the city's most significant assets that can be mobilized to create new economic opportunities and provide for sustainable community development. The largest portion of the Enterprise Community area, which includes the neighborhoods of Upper and Lower South Providence, Elmwood, the West End, and portions of Federal Hill, includes Rhode Island Hospital—the state's largest private employer with a workforce of more than 5,500 employees—Women and Infants Hospital and a number of medical-related businesses, the Community College of Rhode Island, the site of the proposed new career and technical school, several of the city's multipurpose community centers, and dozens of community-based social service agencies. In addition, this portion of the city's Enterprise Community has experienced a significant infusion of housing investment over the past decade.

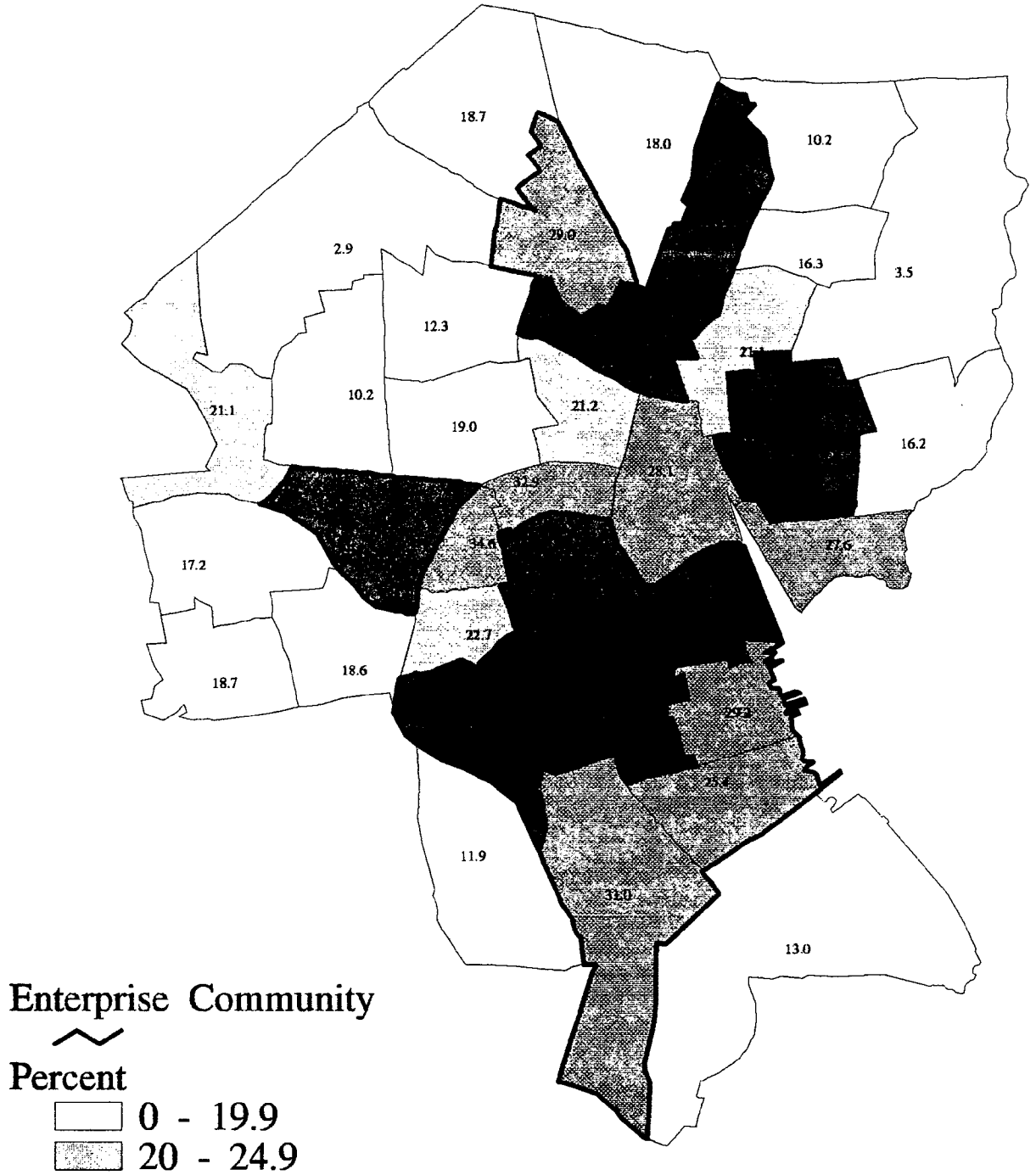
The Olneyville neighborhood (census tract 19) includes the William D'Abate Elementary School, one of twenty elementary schools statewide that is pioneering the concept of Child Opportunity Zones (see chapter 14) to use the schools as a vehicle to link children and their families with integrated health, education, and social services. The neighborhood is also the focal point for the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project, a community-based effort to revitalize the river and the neighborhoods through which it runs.

The northern portion of the city's Enterprise Community zone (census tracts 26, 27, and 30) is adjacent to downtown Providence and the Foundry District its proximity to what the city and state hope will be major economic engines (a new hotel and convention center complex, a regional luxury retail mall under development) pose significant opportunities for jobs and economic self sufficiency for neighborhood residents. In addition, the Smith Hill neighborhood includes several neighborhood-based social agencies, including a community center, a health center, and a community policing station.

Map 5-1
Proposed Enterprise Community Area
Providence Census Tracts

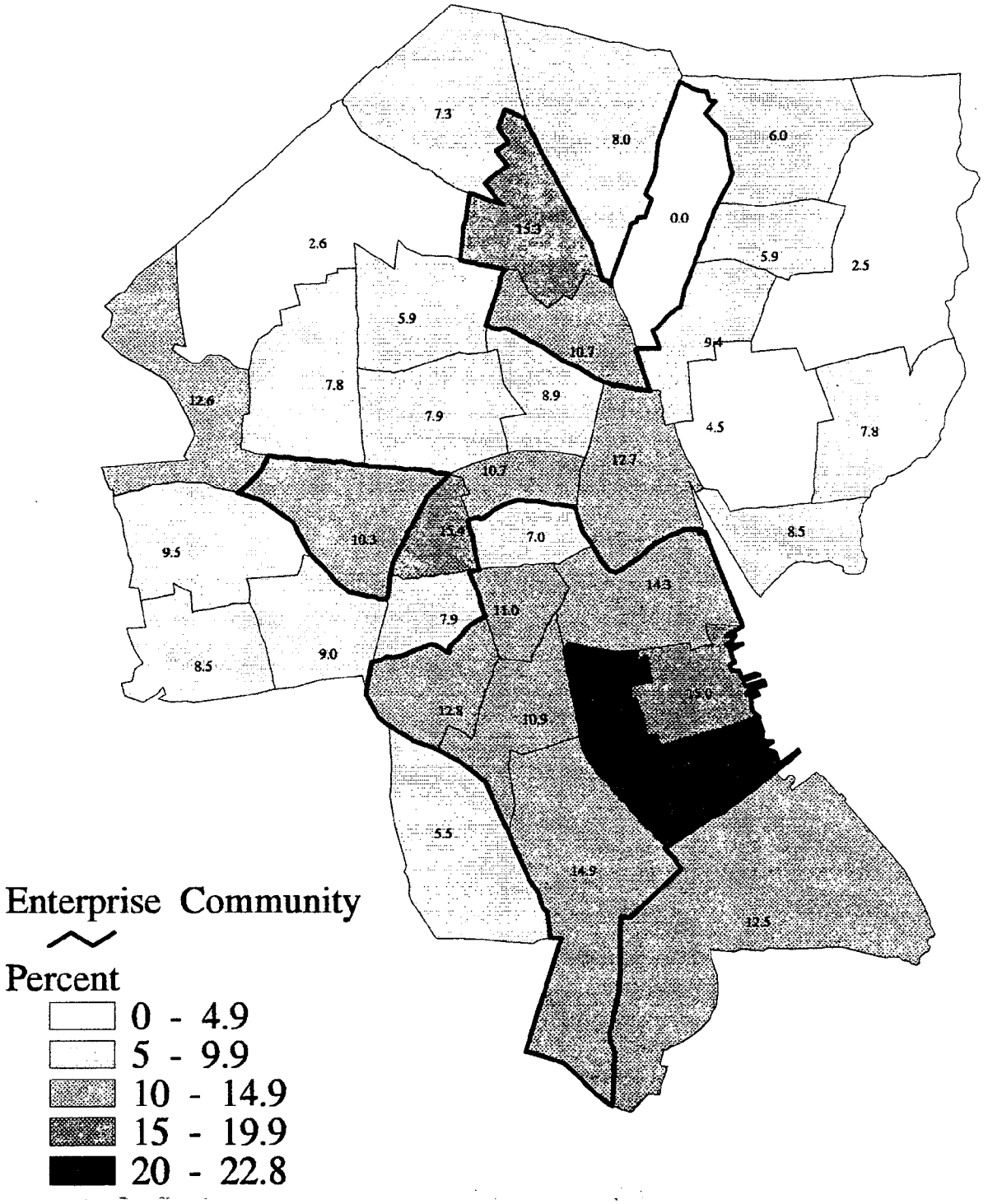


Map 5-2
Percent of Persons Below Poverty, 1990
Providence Census Tracts

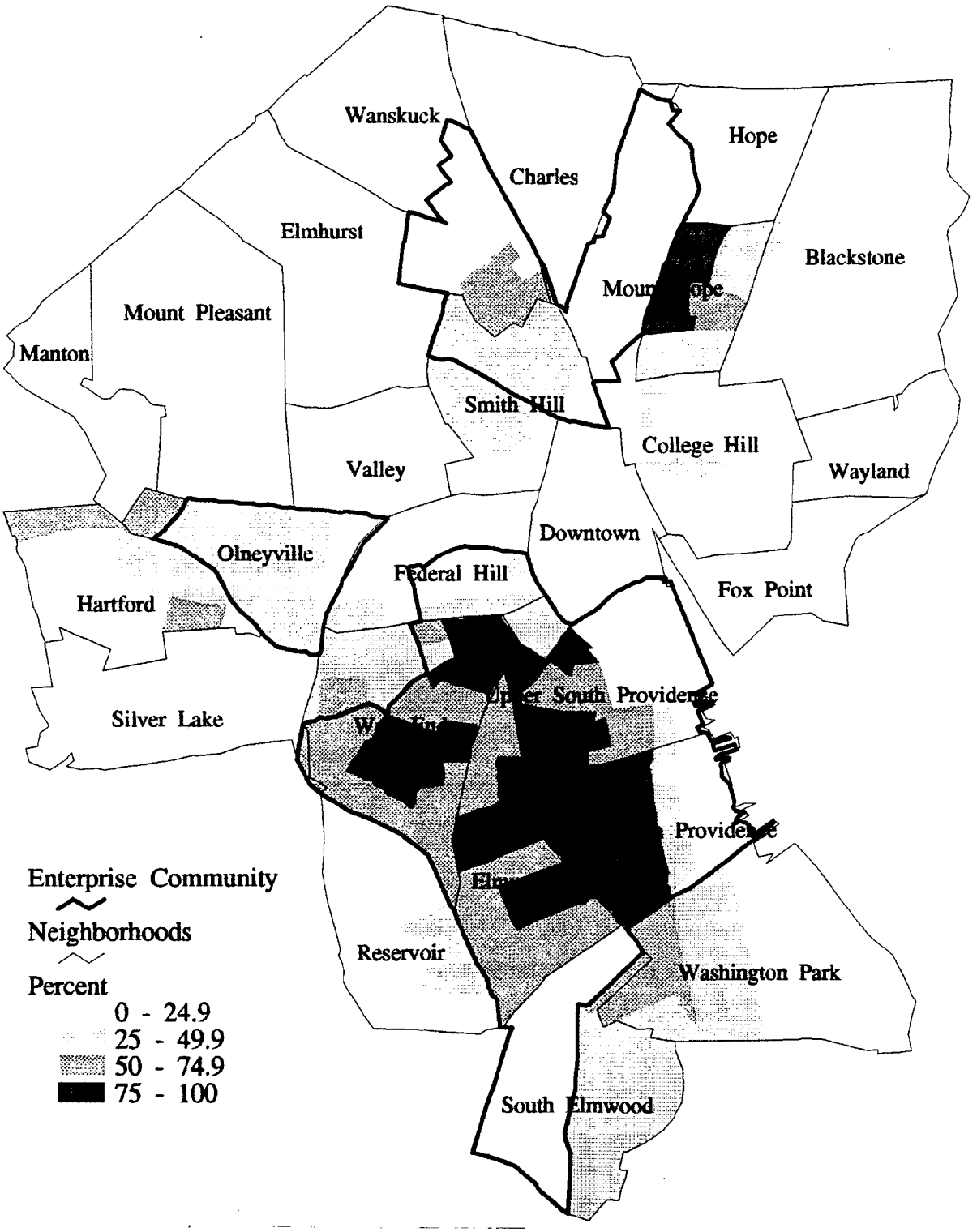


Nominated Area

Map 5-3
Percent Unemployed, 1990
Providence Census Tracts



Map 5-4
Percent Nonwhite, 1990
Providence Census Tracts



Community Involvement in Selection of Nominated Area

Preliminary analysis of the area proposed for designation as Providence's Enterprise Community was completed by the city's Department of Planning and Development and The Providence Plan. Their analyses were based on a variety of criteria and indicators, including measures of economic, social, and physical distress as well as inventory of key community assets and opportunities. A working paper outlining their joint recommendation was then presented to the *ProVision* Steering Committee in April for review and discussion throughout the community-based strategic planning process. The 40-plus member Steering Committee, which was composed of participants from public, private, nonprofit, and community organizations, and represented fairly well the diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural components of Providence's population, approved the proposed boundaries at its final meeting in early June. The proposed boundaries for Providence's Enterprise Community zone were also discussed with the mayor, members of the City Council's Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning, and several representatives of state departments and agencies. All endorsed the proposed boundaries.

Table 5-1
Selected Characteristics for Providence's Enterprise Community

	Providence	*Enterprise Community Zone*	*EC Zone as a Percent of Citywide Total*
POPULATION			
Total persons	160,728	48,758	30.3
White	112,404	19,857	17.7
Nonwhite	48,324	28,901	59.8
Black	23,828	15,107	63.4
Hispanic	24,982	15,322	61.3
Asian and Pacific Islander	9,547	4,652	48.7
American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut	1,495	924	61.8
Foreign born persons	31,532	14,342	45.5
Persons who speak English not well/not at all	12,622	7,587	60.1
Number of households	58,905	15,963	27.1
Number of families	34,893	10,467	30.0
Number of families with children	17,407	6,536	37.5
POPULATION CHANGE			
Percent change, 1980-1990	2.5	6.0	—
Percent change, 1970-1990	-10.3	-13.0	—
Percent change, 1960-1990	-22.5	-35.7	—
Percent change, 1950-1990	-35.4	-52.1	—
Percent change nonwhite population, 1980-1990	63.9	49.0	—
Percent change black population, 1980-1990	28.5	19.9	—
Percent change Hispanic population, 1980-1990	175.4	164.9	—
Percent change Asian population, 1980-1990	463.6	759.9	—
Percent change foreign born population, 1980-1990	49.0	87.2	—
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH			
Number of births, 1989	3,267	1,527	46.7
Number of low-weight births, 1989	435	223	51.3
Number of births with late or no prenatal care, 1989	865	491	56.8
Number of births to teens, 1989	554	318	57.4
Number of WIC recipients, 1993	8,096	4,281	52.9
EDUCATION			
Percent high school graduate or higher, 1990	62.8	48.7	—
Percent college graduate or higher, 1990	21.6	8.0	—
Number of public school students, 1993	21,852	10,163	46.5
Number of ESL students, 1993	3,993	2,404	60.2
Number of high school dropouts, 1992	490	254	51.8
EMPLOYMENT			
Civilian labor force, 1990	76,208	19,210	25.2
Number unemployed, 1990	7,008	2,619	37.4
Percent unemployed, 1990	9.2	13.6	—

Table 5-1, cont'd

	Providence	*Enterprise Community Zone*	*EC Zone as a Percent of Citywide Total*
INCOME, POVERTY, AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE			
Median family income, 1989*	28,342	16,786	59.2
Per capita income, 1989*	11,838	7,073	59.7
Number of persons below poverty, 1989	34,135	16,583	48.6
Percent of persons below poverty, 1989	23.0	35.4	—
Number of families below poverty, 1989	6,471	3,537	54.7
Percent of families below poverty, 1989	18.3	33.4	—
Percent change, median family income, 1979-1989*	89.6	61.7	—
Percent change, persons below poverty, 1979-1989	14.0	20.0	—
Percent change, families below poverty, 1979-1989	13.3	26.8	—
Number of AFDC households, 1993	8,615	4,466	51.8
Number of GPA households, 1993	2,299	1,154	50.2
Number of Food Stamp households, 1993	14,508	7,149	49.3
HOUSING			
Total housing units, 1990	66,794	18,981	28.4
Occupied housing units, 1990	58,905	16,214	27.5
Percent owner-occupied, 1990	36.2	24.1	—
Percent renter-occupied, 1990	63.8	75.9	—
Percent change, total housing units, 1980-1990	-1.1	-11.1	—
Percent change, owner-occupied units, 1980-1990	-4.0	-11.7	—
Number of conventional public housing units, 1993	2,386	1,177	49.3
Number of Sec. 8 certificates/vouchers, 1993	1,881	878	46.7
Number of PHA scattered-site units, 1993	143	107	74.8
Number of other subsidized units, 1993	5,547	2,833	51.1
Total subsidized housing units, 1993	9,924	4,995	50.3
Percent of housing units subsidized, 1993	14.8	26.3	—
PHYSICAL DISTRESS			
Number of vacant properties, 1993	700	475	67.9
Number of structure fires, 1992	446	215	48.2
Number of incendiary fires, 1992	255	119	46.7
CRIME			
Total Part I Crimes	15,452	5,317	34.4
Violent Crimes	1,342	669	49.9
Property Crimes	14110	4648	32.9
Total Part II Crimes	9910	3886	39.2
Narcotics	682	535	78.4

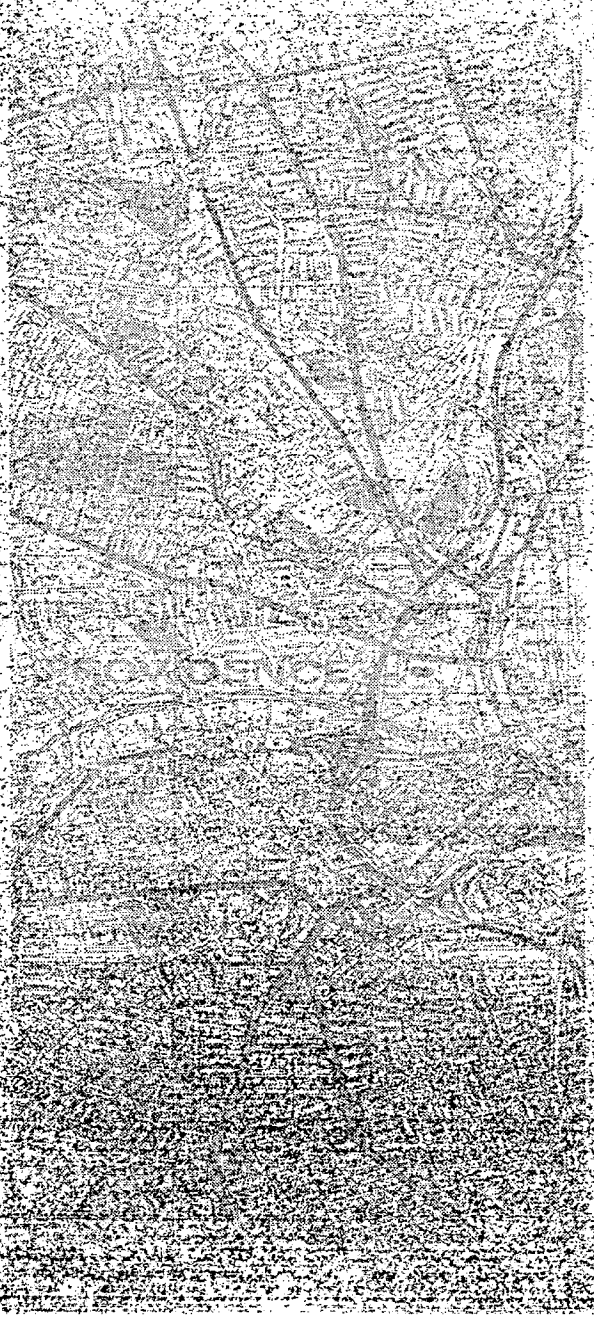
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1990 figures are from STF 3A and Population and Housing Characteristics for Census Tracts and Block Numbering Areas,

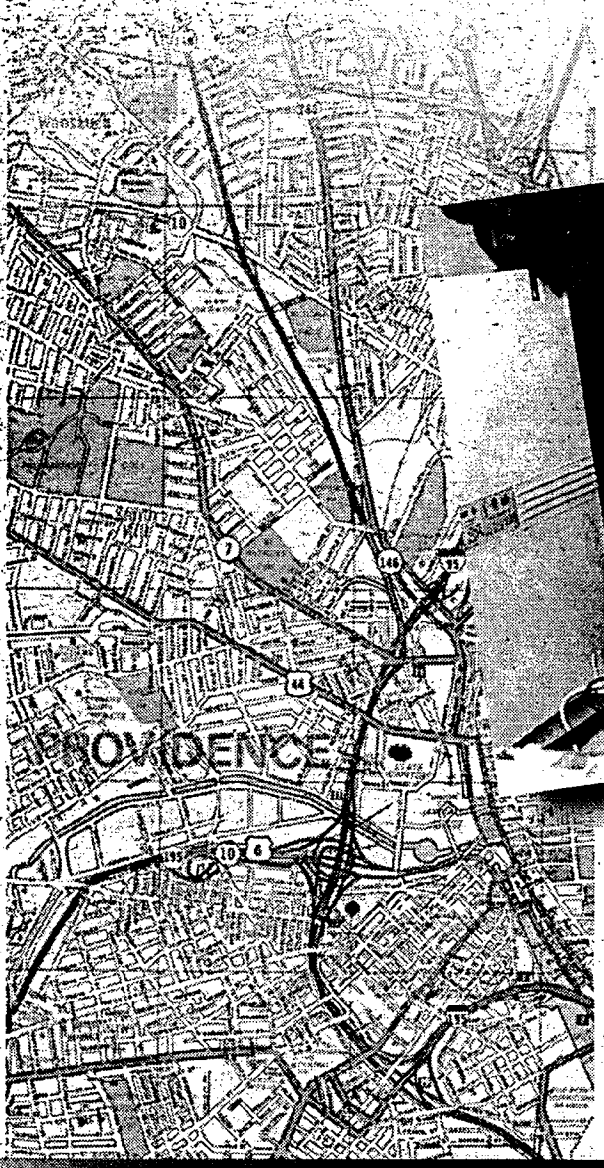
* Figures for Enterprise Community column are means based on census tracts included in EC zone.

Part III

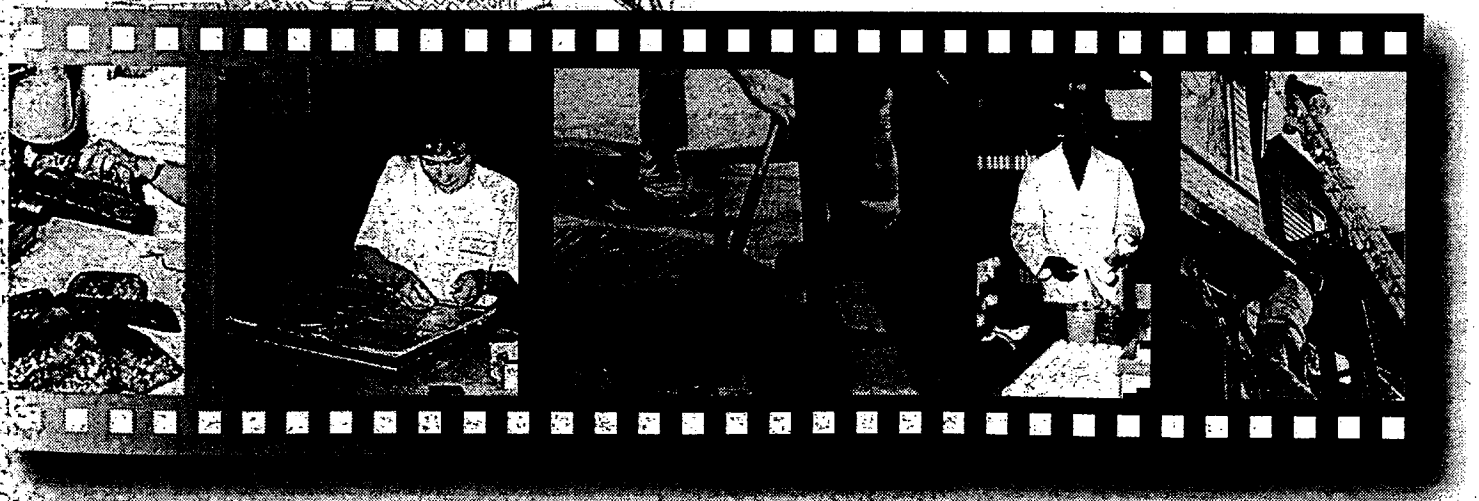
The Strategic Plan

Creating Economic Opportunity





Job Creation



Chapter 6
Job Creation

Vision Statement

Providence should once again become a city in which jobs are available to all who want them, at wages high enough to allow families to be self-sufficient. To expand the city's job base in the short run, public-private partnerships will be organized to provide city residents with new opportunities for employment. Partnerships will also be utilized to expand job training in areas of potential future strength, such as financial and legal services, education, health care, and medical technology. Efforts to improve the city's business climate by providing incentives for investment will be coupled with efforts to improve the city's employment climate by expanding training opportunities for the city's work force. In an expanding global economy, the varied ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of city workers will be an important asset that will be marketed throughout the region and nation. In the long run, the city, working together with business, labor and the nonprofit sector will strive to create high-paying, career-oriented jobs which support families and provide the stability and security necessary to impact positively on the social problems facing Providence today and in the future.

Context

Over the past decade employment has grown at a slower pace in New England and Rhode Island than it has for the nation as a whole. Between 1983 and 1993, total employment increased 22.1 percent for the nation as a whole, but only 6.5 percent in New England. In Rhode Island, employment growth was slightly below the region average, at 6.4 percent during this period. Changes in manufacturing employment were even more pronounced. While national manufacturing employment declined by 3.4 percent between 1983 and 1993, New England (25.6% decline) and Rhode Island (24% decline) lost one-fourth of their manufacturing jobs.

According to a recent analysis by the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, these trends in job loss are even more dramatic when one compares recent employment levels with their peak level over the past decade. Between 1989, when the average annual employment in Rhode Island reached 462,000, and November 1993, when employment was 420,900, Rhode Island lost 41,100 jobs (8.9% decline). RIPEC notes that if economic recovery is defined as the point at which employment reaches its pre-recession peak, it will take Rhode Island at least 10 years to recover from the last recession.

More important than the number of jobs is the quality of the jobs created. There simply are not enough jobs being created in the Rhode Island economy that allow residents to maintain a decent standard of living. One recent analysis of job listings available through the Rhode Island Department of Employment and Training indicated that while there were 12,235 jobs listed in the year ending June 1993, the vast majority of them (10,400) were hourly wage jobs, and of these, only nine had wages above $12.50 per hour.

The Providence Department of Planning and Development has identified these industries as having excellent job creation potential in Providence:

- Medical services
- Jewelry manufacture and supporting industries
- Retail — single site mall
- Service industries — tourism, entertainment
- Financial/technical services
- Skilled construction trades
- Retail — neighborhood

A total of 725 new jobs were created in Providence in 1993 and the last three months of 1992 and fourteen new businesses, primarily manufacturing, were established in the City.

Some of the major public bodies that promote economic development and job creation the Providence include the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development, the Providence Department of Planning and Development, Port of Providence, Providence Economic Development Corporation, and the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce.

Voices from the Community

Job creation and expansion received the third lowest rating of the twelve policy areas during the baseline assessment conducted as part of the *ProVision* strategic planning process. In these surveys, task force participants and community members throughout the city were asked to rate how they felt Providence was performing in these areas.

Members of the Job Creation Task Force identified two important approaches to job creation. Traditional job creation strategies in the city focus upon attracting large businesses, often through tax incentives. There was strong sentiment that this must be complimented by neighborhood economic development, for these "mom and pop" employers are the fabric of the community.

The importance of corporate social responsibility and long-term commitments by companies to the future of Providence should not be underestimated. Hasbro's construction of the children's wing of Rhode Island Hospital and Narragansett Electric's Manchester Street Repowering project are examples of private sector investment in the public good which leads to jobs and long-term development. The city should be aggressive in establishing mutually beneficial public-private partnerships which secure jobs for local residents.

Providence needs public and private leadership towards a shared vision of the future. The city needs to identify the types of industry that have the greatest potential and get all aspects of the public and private sector, from City Hall to the Chamber of Commerce to the school system to public transportation, to collaborate in establishing the conditions necessary to promote them.

"We want a redefinition of private/public sector roles. The private sector needs to assume their responsibilities and force the public sector to let them lead on occasion. As it is, the private sector has abdicated their leadership responsibilities."

— A task force participant

"I work in a restaurant as a dishwasher. I'd like a better job, but it keeps me off the streets. I can't get into as much trouble as I would hanging around with my buddies who do nothing all day."

— GED student

"A recent study by the State Office of Planning indicates that there is a scarcity of fully serviced 'construction ready' sites for economic development throughout the state, including Providence. The City wants to be able to meet new demands for such space and is fully committed to devoting necessary efforts to provide the needed 'construction ready' sites for both industry and commerce."

— Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan

Strategies

1. ***Continue to improve the business climate.*** Quite simply, jobs will be created if businesses want to relocate to Providence. Extensive waterfront redevelopment, improvement of the city's physical infrastructure and growth of higher education in the city makes Providence an exciting city to work in. We must continue this development, keeping an eye towards the special needs of business that have strong growth potential in the city.

Next Steps

- Improve the education system so that it adequately prepares students for the reality of the job market in the city. We must make a real, long- term commitment to our youth and human resources investment. In turn, a workforce that has the skills wanted by businesses will prove a strong incentive for businesses to locate or expand in the city. By developing ties between business and education and planning for the workforce needs of the future, a skilled workforce will become Providence's greatest asset. A collaborative public/private effort should be initiated between the private sector, the RI Department of Economic Development, the Providence public schools, and the Human Resource Investment Council to connect education and workforce training to economic development and promotion efforts.
- Use vacant and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings and lots to attract new business development. What many citizens of Providence consider a blight can be a major asset. But because there is no coordinated effort at tracking available property, new businesses cannot take advantage of this. The city should develop a database of available parcels and buildings and work with potential businesses to develop creative strategies for relocation.
- Offer reduced utility rates for businesses which relocate to Providence. Narragansett Electric, Providence Gas and the Narragansett Bay Commission should work closely with the city and the Chamber of Commerce to construct start-up business packages to lure new companies.
- Develop Providence's extensive waterfront and existing aesthetic qualities and market them as amenities for business attraction and retention.
- Provide adequate transportation from population centers where jobs are needed most to areas outside the city which employ city residents. RIPTA must be an active partner in providing transportation options necessary to connect employers to employees.

2. ***Foster and strengthen partnerships and alliances among government, the private sector, higher education, and others to promote economic development in Providence and Rhode Island.*** The success of public-private partnerships has been shown as many occasions in the city. This must be coupled with a statewide effort to support development in Providence.

Next Steps

- Build upon new and existing public and private investments like the Waterfront development, expansion of the hospital complex, the implementation of the Downcity Plan, housing construction and rehabilitation activity under the Providence Plan Housing Corporation, the Providence Place Mall, and the Old Harbor/I-195 Relocation project to ensure jobs go to Providence residents. Construction of the Westin Hotel at the convention center was predicated upon a commitment to hire 100 trained Providence residents to work in the hotel.
- Develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for Providence which targets specific industries particularly appropriate given the city's resources and assets.
- Commit to attracting jobs which pay a living wage and have long-term prospects rather than low-paying retail and service positions.

3. ***Improve and coordinate marketing of the city throughout the state and nation.*** The unique skills of Providence residents and the positive reasons for doing business in the city should be identified and communicated to potential firms. Aggressive and coordinated public leadership at the city and state level can make this happen. Rhode Island is too small for intra-state competition. The strengths of Providence and other parts of the state should be promoted to compliment each other.

Next Steps

- Redesign the state's economic development system to emphasize cooperation and partnerships between the private sector and with local governments. This should include a collaborative public/private effort between the private sector, the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development and the City of Providence which assesses the city's needs and assets in a state and regional context.
- Market Providence's specific ethnic and linguistic diversity as an asset and a strength, especially to businesses with international business connections. These also include a skilled workforce, extensive higher education and medical services, and numerous available vacant buildings.

Assets and Opportunities

Providence has developed an infrastructure for new industrial development through a massive redevelopment plan which has to date included the construction of a convention center and the rerouting of two rivers. Over a billion dollars in construction activity will occur in the City over the next decade, in itself creating construction jobs, and bringing new long-term jobs into the city.

Downcity Plan. One example is the expansion of the Providence Performing Arts Center that will create a total of 75 new employment position in addition to the already existing 95 positions.

Mall of New England. There are three major job generators as a result of the construction of the Mall. The first is the construction of the Mall itself. Over 3500 construction jobs are anticipated over three years. The second element of the Mall project is the reconstruction of the highway ramps. This $30 million project will result in the creation of over 200 new jobs in the road construction industry. Finally, retail and managerial jobs will be necessary to run the many stores in the Mall. Based on malls of similar size, 2000 permanent and 500 part-time jobs are projected.

The Industrial Competitiveness Alliance

Providence area industrial firms are challenged by global competition, strict environmental requirements and new quality demands. Yet many of these industrial firms lack the resources to access and implement new technology opportunities and operating practices. As a result, an already eroded industrial base is in danger of further deterioration.

The majority of Rhode Island business are moderately sized; 90% percent employ fewer than 100 people. Last year, Providence-based Narragansett Electric formed a partnership with the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce to plan and implement an industrial competitiveness program aimed at such small industrial firms. The program's goal is help small businesses in the state stay in business.

Arthur D. Little, Inc. was retained as a consultant for this project. The project began identifying industries with the greatest potential for growth in the state by analyzing the percentage share of total manufacturing market, growth rates, the number of such establishments in Rhode Island, high technology component, low recap investment requirements, environmental friendliness, reputation, tradition and growing market potential. The industries selected were jewelry, tool and die, instrumentation and plastics.

As part of the program, a benchmarking process took place aimed at determining the "Best-in-Class" business practices across the United States for pilot companies in the target industries. Over half of the pilot companies were Providence-based companies. The quantifiable aspects of the manufacturing operations of the "Best-in-Class" firms were determined and

transition plans were developed. Each plan consists of a prioritized listing of projects that each participant could implement to move themselves in the direction of the "Best-in-Class".

The shop floor was the strongest function of the eight companies; many of the firms had reinvested profits in the shop; many contained advanced machinery. Arthur D. Little, Inc. concluded that most of the improvements will not require substantial financial capital outlays for new technologies.

There are a number of resources that exist in our community today which seek to address some of these needs. Unfortunately they are fragmented and uncoordinated.

Arthur D. Little, Inc. recommended structuring a program called the Rhode Island Industrial Competitiveness Alliance. The Alliance would be managed by a board of directors that will include large Rhode Island businesses, chambers of commerce, small and large manufacturers, and institutions of higher learning.

The Alliance is currently being formed and the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce has just approved a three year budget of over one million dollars. A national search will be launched this summer with a view toward bringing a director on board by the end of the year. ■

Manchester Street Repowering Project

Naragansett Electric Company (NECO) and the New England Power Company are completely refurbushing the Manchester Streer Station in Providence. The project will contribute to the city's waterfront revitilization, reduce air emissions, create hundreds of new construction jobs and provide substantial tax revenue.

The project is an opportunity to support and encourage the development of minority-owned enterprises. In conjunction with the Black Legislative Caucus and minority contractors, the Manchester Street Repowering Project and its prime contractor, Betchel Power Corporation, established both minority and women business contracting goals as well as a minority and female work force participation goal. The minority and women business enterprises (MBE/WBE) contracting goal for the project is $10 million and awards to MBE/WBE constractors already total $6 million. Their stated intent is to ensure that "Rhode Island based minority contractors emerge from this project stronger and more competitive in the construction marketplace."

The Manchester Street Repowering Project has served as a catalyst in strenghtening the Black Contractors Association and the formation of the RI Hispanic Contractors Association. NECO organized a Minority Contracting Financing Seminar to bring together minority contractors, lending institutions and various other community, city and state organizations. The company has also provided aggressive leadership in the areas of bonding and insurance support to minority owned construction firms participating in the Manchester Street Repowering Project.

Additionally, NECO has also spearheaded the implementation of a construction trades training program for minorities. Welding technology training was selected because it is central to pipe fitting, iron working, plumbing and electricoan trades. Most job opportunities available on the project are in these trades. Upon completion of the program, it is anticipated that the trainees will enter trades as apprentices. NECO's funding for the program leveraged funding from the Providence/Cranston JPTA program and Workforce 2000. In conjunction with this effort, NECO also developed an innovative minority construction trade skills bank at the Urban League of Rhode Island. ■

State Enterprise Zone Program

The objective of the State Enterprise Zone program, which the city of Providence helped to craft, is to undertake an experimental program to stimulate economic revitalization, promote employment opportunities, and encourage business development and expansion in distressed areas.

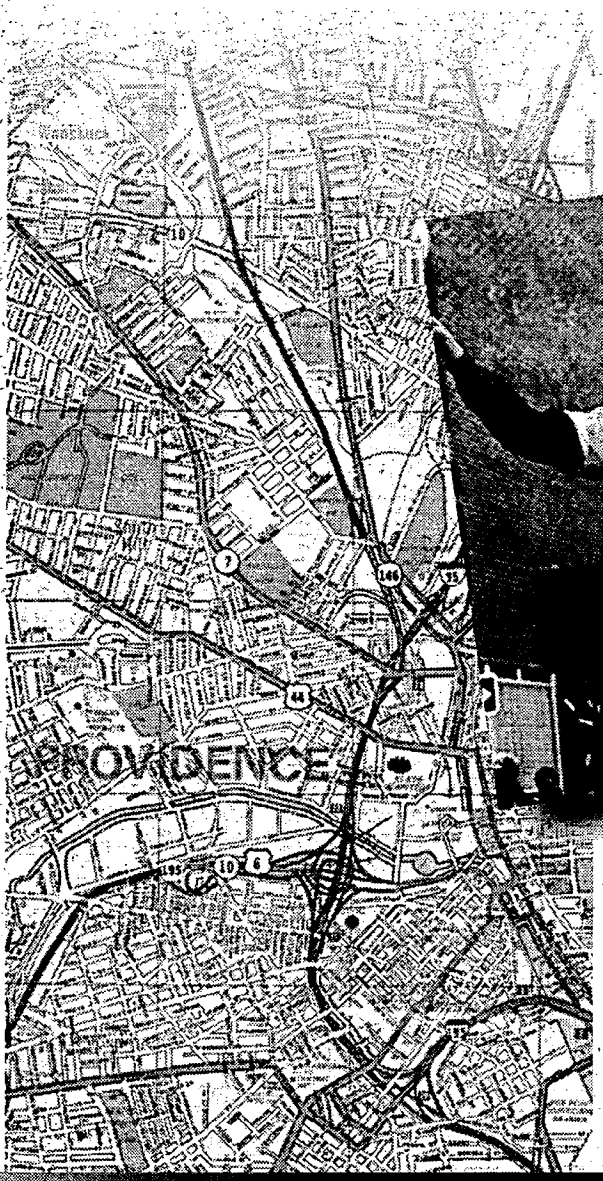
The two zones in Providence, which cover five census tracts, contain areas such as the 37-acre former Gorham Silversmiths site, the one million square foot former Brown and Sharpe Foundry, the Jewelry District, an industrial park, the entire downtown, as well as many of the historic mills of the city. Two of the five census tracts including in the state enterprise zones in Providence (7, 19), which cover portions of the Upper South Providence and Olneyville neighborhoods, are also included in the Enterprise Community boundaries.

A variety of incentives have been formulated to encourage business expansion and job creation in Providence's enterprise zones. Among these are:

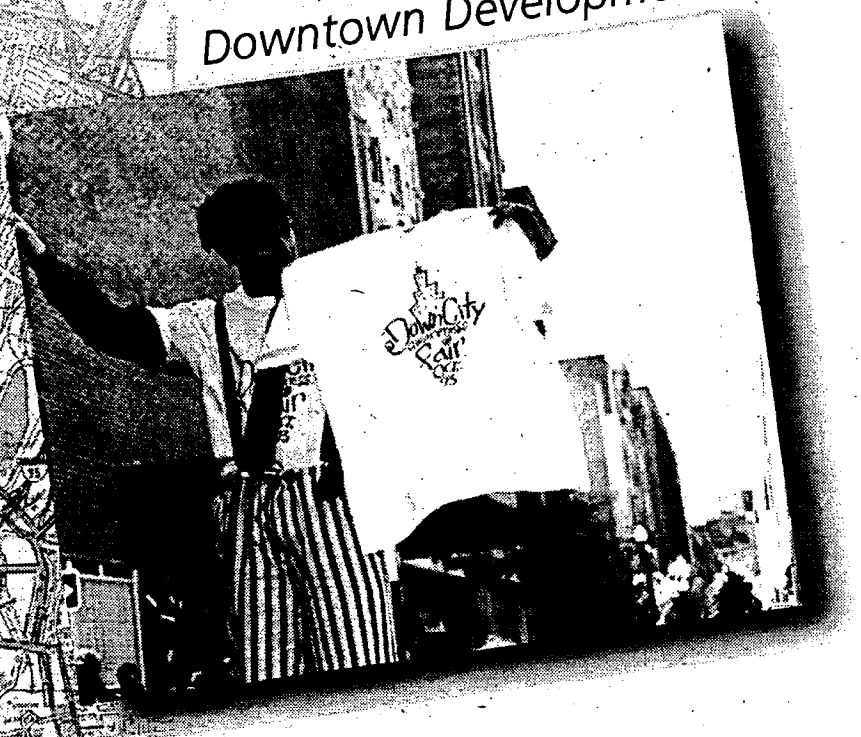
- A credit of 50 percent of salaries paid to newly hired enterprise job employees can be applied to a company's yearly state income tax liability, to a maximum credit of $10,000 per employee count by 5 percent per year.
- Residents of the enterprise zone who own and operate a qualified business may deduct $50,000 per year from their federal adjusted income to be applied to the resident business owner's state personal income tax liability.
- A taxpayer or corporation is eligible for a 10 percent tax credit for interest earned on loans made to qualified businesses and a 100 tax credit on interest earned on loans made for construction, expansion or rehabilitation.

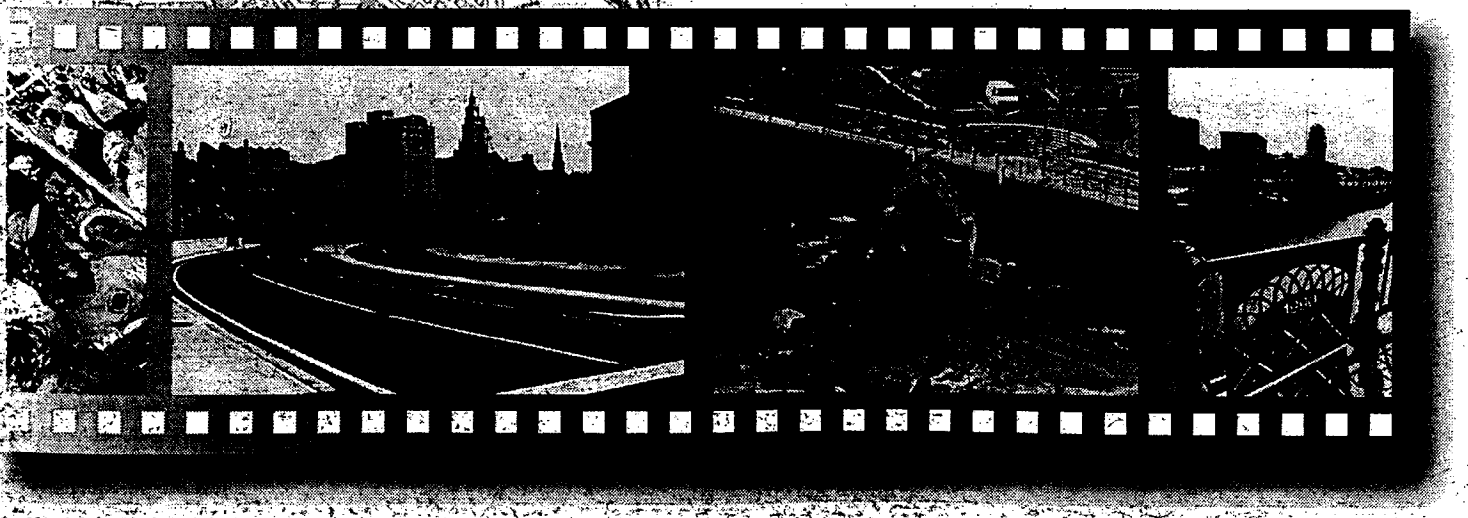
In addition, the city and state are commited to using the enterprise zone program as an organizational means for promoting economic development. A number of other programs that offer business assistance, job training, and commercial loans are also offered to enterprise zone businesses.

A total of 725 new jobs were created in the Providence enterprise zones in 1993 and the last three months of 1992; 14 new businesses were established in the city during this period. ■



Downtown Development





Chapter 7
Downtown Development

Vision Statement

Downtown Providence will have the same place in the hearts of Rhode Islanders that it did 40 years ago. The area will be a growing source of good jobs and will support the city's main economic base. Downtown Providence will be a safe and stimulating place to be during day and night, flooded on week-nights by residents and tourists utilizing the nationally known arts and entertainment district. The area will be known for its musical and theatrical groups, visual artists, its diverse cultural representation and numerous entertainment options. The ethnic and cultural diversity of Providence is showcased in the downtown area. All members of the community are able to access housing and commercial space in the numerous vacant buildings in the old retail core.

A mix of commerce, housing, education, and recreation will be developed. Housing has become a realty in the numerous upper floors of under utilized commercial buildings. Downtown will be a residential neighborhood and one that is also connected physically and spiritually with the other City neighborhoods. The twenty-four hour population engenders a feeling of safety in visitors and in shop owners. Buildings with historic, architectural, and cultural significance will have new productive uses that add to the vitality of downtown, particularly within the older core. Its waterfront will be revitalized and accessible to its citizens. Downtown will be accessible by car, high speed rail, improved mass transit, water transportation, walkways and bike paths. Its leaders and organizations, both public and private will work together, be coordinated, and reflect the diverse nature of the city.

Context

Downtown Providence includes the area bounded by Interstate Highways 95 and 195 to the south and west; the State House area to the north; and North and South Main Streets to the east. It includes several functionally distinct areas:

- The Financial District, which is the main office area.
- The Downcity area which is the older retail and class "C" office building core.
- Weybosset Hill, the secondary office area.
- The Foundry / CIC Complex to the west of I-95
- Capital Center, an emerging area of offices, housing, retail, parks, riverwalks and convening facilities.
- Lower College Hill occupied primarily by RISD, the State Courthouse, offices and specialty retail and restaurants along North and South Main Streets.
- There are adjacent areas such as the Jewelry District, the Foundry District and the planned Old Harbor District.

Many Rhode Islanders remember downtown Providence with a nostalgic fondness. Before the malls were built in nearby suburbs, downtown Providence was the only place to shop, to visit restaurants or to find entertainment activities. On a Saturday afternoon 30 to 40 years ago, the old retail core was full of activity. In the 1990s, there are few, if any, people walking the streets after 5 o'clock. Businesses are rarely open weekday evenings or on week-ends. There have been and continue to be efforts to revert to the days when going downtown was something special. Now, after years of disinvestment, Downcity Providence is poised to make a come-back.

There are many historic buildings downtown, some of them important architectural and cultural landmarks, which stand vacant. The vacancy of these buildings has profound ramifications on the downtown fabric and on the opinions of Providence residents. Some taxes do not nurture the business community, government could ensure that more of these buildings will be renovated and once again bring vibrancy to the retail core. At the same time, parking must be ample and be of the type which serves the needs of the small business owners. Also, the large scale development of some tangential areas should not occur at the expense of the old core areas. Development should adhere to one policy where the needs of all subpopulations are addressed.

The downtown, due to public and private investment over the last 15 years, has maintained its position as the government, office, institutional and entertainment center of the City and State. The downtown zip code area provides about 40,000 jobs or close to 40 percent of all jobs in the City. However, retail has virtually deserted the downtown particularly, in the older Downcity core area.

Also, the City's office supply increased by about 80 percent from 1985 to 1993, and the current overall vacancy rate is 20 percent. The older core / Downcity office building vacancy is almost 45 percent. The Downcity area once represented all that was good about downtown and Providence and now represents all that is bad. As it is in the central part of downtown, it is affectionately known as the "hole in the doughnut." This area has, and continues to receive intense planning and development efforts to transform the area into housing, educational uses, arts and entertainment and specialty retail.

The Capital Center area has received recent investment in the new offices and housing. Most recently, investment in a major convention center and hotel has been made. There is a proposed 900,000 square foot regional retail center and a 5,000 car parking garage that is dominating attention.

The Woonasquatucket, Moshassuck and Providence Rivers run through downtown connecting many of the districts as well as certain residential neighborhoods. Although Providence was founded and prospered due to its waterfront, the City turned its back on its waterfront in the 1950's. However, there is a comprehensive and ambitious waterfront revitalization program that is about 50 percent implemented. Active in this revitilization effort is the Coalition for Community Development, a consortium of corporations, such as the Providence Gas Company, and institutions such as Johnson and Wales, with offices or interests downtown. They plan to spend $500,000 in the first of a five-year plan to revitalize the area.

Voices from the Community

The downtown development decision making process was questioned by task force participants. There existed the perception among some task force members that the major players in city government and downtown real estate will move ahead with their plans for downtown development regardless of public opinion. There were task force members who felt that having city and state referenda for "big ticket" items was a priority.

At the same time, there was an overall theme that artists should drive the revitalization of the downtown area through economic activity and housing development. Because Rhode Island, more specifically Providence, has a high concentration of artists, downtown should be a place where that is promoted heavily. An "Art Made in Rhode Island" catalog could be used to market the city across the country.

Another theme concerned selling downtown Providence to Rhode Islanders and others from outside the state. In that discussion, public safety issues including appropriate street lights and having more "beat cops were brought to the forefront. The perception of theft and vandalism drive visitors away. The sentiment of Andres Duany that these things should be taken care of immediately, before new visitors are able to form a poor opinion, was shared by the group.

"There has to be municipal performance to go with [the Downcity Plan] ... a level of maintenance where no piece of paper ever stays on the ground ... where absolutely no crime occurs ... Volunteer yourselves ... a public-private partnership [must be developed] to administer the proposals made [in this plan] ... include the owners, the potential buyers, the potential renters, the artists, the bankers ..."

— Andres Duany in the Downcity Plan

"The amount and type of parking is insufficient, particularly in the downtown, to satisfy the demand. An availability of short-term parking options will support downtown commercial activity. There is also a need for alternate modes of transportation to relieve pressure on available parking."

— A task force Participant

"There is a need for more activity in the downtown retail core including retail, housing and support services."

— Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan

"Downtown should be a stable source of jobs; it should be a regional and national center for graphics, design, advertising, office and finance, arts and entertainment, higher education, retail, medical services and tourism."

— Providence Foundation

Strategies

1. ***Make "full buildings" a priority.*** This is an issue of both housing and economic development. Empty buildings create a blight in downtown which discourages people from moving into the city and businesses from locating or expanding here. Full buildings are the most essential requirement in developing a livable downtown with a vibrant residential and commercial base.

   ### Next Steps

   - Create a real estate tax policy and program that encourages, rather than discourages, conversion of upper floors in the older commercial buildings in Downcity Providence to housing. A housing owner / developer should have a predictable tax assessment that reflects commercial values of ten years ago.
   - Create housing options for artists and others in the retail and commercial core. Housing in downtown Providence is the answer to a number of critical problems. A 24-hour population will be created. The disposable income of these new residents will generate economic activity and will help break the cycle of disuse and disinvestment. Because very few people live downtown, there is little political representation and thus, no true advocate for the needs of the area. A stable residential population will change that. Coordinate and utilize existing housing programs and resources of the Providence Plan Housing Corporation, HOPE III, Department of Planning & Development, Rhode Island Housing & Mortgage Finance Corporation, The Coalition for Community Development, Federal Section 8 vouchers, and neighborhood-based nonprofit housing agencies.
   - Create a more efficient licensing process and modify the current coding system. Building and fire codes pose significant barriers, which should be addressed by the Department of Inspections and Standards and the State Fire Marshall's Office. Licensing is another barrier which should be overcome through an ombudsman system.
   - Connect the downtown colleges and universities with downtown development activities. These institutions, such as Johnson & Wales University and the University of Rhode Island's Providence Campus, should integrate with overall development plans so that they take advantage of existing vacant building space and compliment downtown's aesthetic qualities.

2. ***Create more jobs in the downtown area.*** Jobs can be created particularly in the fields of office, retail, tourism and arts. With a larger daytime population, more businesses could be sustained and a different downtown "attitude" will begin to form. The creation of more downtown jobs will create a cyclical effect which will cause an influx of new money into the area which will create more jobs which will eventually lead to the complete revitalization of the area. Better connections between downtown jobs and neighborhood residents are needed.

   ### Next Steps

   - Develop a "Downtown Providence Economic Development Center." This could provide a one-stop shopping center where all information would be available for would-be developers, business owners and entrepreneurs in the downtown area. Outreach efforts to existing businesses and marketing efforts to potential businesses will be part

of this program. For efficiency purposes, this might be a city-wide center. The resources of existing organizations should be utilized rather than creating new agencies.

- Phase out, reduce or remove the tangible personal property tax in the city of Providence. This would reduce the cost of doing business for certain types of office and retail operations. Some Rhode Island communities have done this with wholesaling companies as part of a targeted economic development strategy. Providence could do the same to help attract and retain office companies who "export" their services.
- Place a five year moratorium on the 7% Rhode Island sales tax in the downtown area. This should be done in order to generate retail and restaurant activity in the older core known as the Downcity area. The redevelopment of retail along the Westminster Street corridor is central to the Downcity Plan and to the change in statewide and citywide perception.
- Improve public input into the decision-making process for downtown development. The R.I. Convention Center and proposed Mall of New England are two examples of projects undertaken without satisfactory public input. Personal and human reinvestment must join physical reinvestment in the rebirth of the city.
- Increase access of ethnic and racial minorities into business development in the downtown area. By encouraging all members of the community to participate in the downtown celebration of Providence's diversity, the variety will become the most effective marketing tool.
- Explore the creation of business incubators / institutes. These should be focused on both the "Design, Graphic Arts, Advertising and Visual Arts" sector and the "Computer Science" sector.

3. ***Develop and promote downtown as a center for arts and artists and as an arts and entertainment destination.*** Providence is the region's center for arts and entertainment. This strength should be developed and promoted to bring tourists, conventioneers and local residents into the city.

Next Steps

- Organize a cohesive approach to "post-event" activities. Arts and entertainment events should be complemented by restaurants, coffee houses and bars to give people the option of a full night on the town.
- Fund artists' involvement in downtown. Artists are essential to the long-term process of revitalizing Providence, their presence and dedication should be supported and enhanced.
- Create a program to develop artists as business people. Training in business skills, providing seed money and loans, and marketing assistance for artists will be part of this program.

4. ***Market downtown's assets within the city, within the state and across the nation.*** People who know Providence regard it as an undiscovered gem. With its extensive arts and entertainment opportunities, educational facilities, excellent restaurants, and revitalized waterfront, downtown is an excellent place to live, work and relax. The city also can boast of a cultural diversity and aesthetic beauty unrivaled by any city of comparable size in New England. A comprehensive marketing campaign should capitalize on these assets to improve the city's image.

Next Steps

- Develop a sense of responsibility and accountability on the part of business owners, building owners and city government. A good example of this need was the lack of cooperation during this past winter in clearing snow from the sidewalks in front of some downtown businesses. As a first step, implement the "Keep Downtown Clean and Beautiful" program.
- Downtown needs better management. For strong economic and housing development as well as for image improvement purposes, downtown needs better management in the areas of cleanliness, maintenance of public parks and infrastructure, security and promotion.
- Change the way the Narragansett Electric Company charges for lighting in the downtown area. The "city rate" only applies to the so-called cobra-head lights. That should be changed so the city can better afford to use more appropriate lighting that would match the new street lights and give character to the downtown area. Lighting is a central issue to the problem of public safety at night, which discourages visitors from evening events.
- Make downtown more tourist friendly. The Providence Visitors and Convention Bureau is becoming more accessible and active with non-convention tourists. This should continue.
- Enroll all cab drivers, police officers, bus drivers and any other worker representing the city or the state in hospitality training. Public and hospitality workers should make a greater effort to represent the city positively to visitors.
- Market downtown artists and culture together. Develop the proposed "Cultural Banner Trail."

5. ***Develop a transportation strategy which services downtown residents, workers and visitors.*** An inadequate mass transit system poses a significant problem for downtown businesses. A strategy for short-term inexpensive parking will make downtown a more competitive option for retail, commercial and arts ventures. In the long run, an improved multi-modal, interconnected mass transit system consisting of highways, mass transit, water transportation, bikeways and walkways, and more importantly, high speed rail transportation should be developed to reduce the need for downtown parking, thereby saving valuable central land from a parking development and for business and homeowner investment.

Next Steps

- Link the proposed Providence Place mall with downtown, particularly with the original retail core of downtown Providence. This could be accomplished by a rail line or shuttle bus from the State House to Davol Square down the center of Francis, Dorrance and Eddy Streets. Pedestrian links are needed also. The mall architecture should complement downtown's architecture and "look out" on downtown rather than being a self-enclosed structure. Marketing and management links can be developed.
- Ensure the I-195 relocation links the retail core and Weybosset Hill with the Jewelry District. The new design should benefit all Providence residents. The impact of the numerous "big ticket" items (e.g. The Rhode Island Convention Center, The Mall of New England, the I-195 Relocation) should be addressed on both a city and state level as to whose needs are being best served.

- Continue to coordinate planning activities with the Rhode Island Department of Transportation. The proposed parking garage for the Mall of New England and the pending electrification of the rail lines between New Haven and Boston are two examples of how regional transportation decisions affect downtown Providence dramatically.

6. ***Continue to revitalize the downtown Providence waterfront.*** The Providence waterfront had been ignored for almost 50 years. The City literally covered over part of its waterfront with parking. A revitalization of the waterfront has begun and will result in much needed open space along the waterfront; a new waterfront image for downtown; water, walkway and bikeway transportation opportunities; increased commercial and housing opportunities and general overall aesthetic improvement. This should continue.

Next Steps

- Enhance the Woonasquatucket River Greenway as it enters the downtown area. The river passes under the railroad tracks, through the future site of the Mall of New England, and is celebrated in Capital Center. Therefore, the improvement of access to the river and the maintenance of existing access is integral to encouraging pedestrian activity downtown.
- Market the urban waterfront as a tourist destination. The Providence river should be promoted as an amenity and should be treated as such in planning activities. Implement the Old Harbor Plan.

Assets and Opportunities

A great deal of development activity has taken place in downtown Providence in the past decade and several additional projects are underway or planned for the near future. Major projects include the river relocation project, the construction of new office buildings, the opening of the Rhode Island Convention Center, the construction of a central campus for Johnson & Wales University and several revitalized streets and bridges. A new luxury hotel and jewelry trade center are nearing completion adjacent to the convention center and financing is being arranged for the Providence Place/Mall of New England, a regional upscale shopping center, which will occupy a substantial part of the Capital Center area. Construction for the mall could begin as soon as Fall of this year.

In addition to these major projects, *a number of smaller projects* have recently been completed or are presently construction. These include the reopening of the Strand Theater, Lupo's Heartbreak Hotel, the Met Cafe, the relocation of AS220, the expansion of the Providence Performing Arts Center's stage, and the creation of Grace Park. Also, the Downcity Plan is a soon to be implemented effort to revitalize the old retail core, including specialty retail, and a significant effort to integrate housing into the numerous vacant commercial buildings while creating a new arts and entertainment district.

There are a number of development activities currently underway in the downtown area. The former Weybosset Street Comfort Station is being remodeled into a community policing station / ticketing and information center. Grace Park is being developed on the site of four buildings at the corner of Westminster and Mathewson Streets. AS220, a provider of work and show space for local artists, has located in the old retail core. These projects, in addition to existing institutions such as Trinity Repertory Company, the Providence Civic Center, the Rhode Island Philharmonic at Veterans Memorial Auditorium, serve to enhance the development of an arts and entertainment district in downtown Providence.

With the recent development that has occurred in the traditional downtown as well as the activity that is underway or planned on its edges, the identity of downtown Providence is undergoing rapid change. In order to thrive and prosper in the next decade and beyond, downtown Providence, and particularly the old retail core, needs to define a vision or a purpose for itself. An important question that requires further reflection is what function and role downtown Providence, including its several subcomponents, should play in the city's future and how downtown will relate to the city's neighborhoods and the larger metropolitan area and region.

Arts and Entertainment District

Thanks to many institutions, including the Rhode Island School of Design, the city of Providence and its downtown are blessed with significant performing arts facilities, visual arts facilities, and thousands of talented artists and artisans. These are assets of the city that have recently been recognized for their potential to create economic development, a new city image, and new vibrancy.

Due to activities in this area, Providence has recently received a "City Livability" award from the United States Conference of Mayors. In the past, the arts and entertainment district activities have included strengthening existing organizations such as the Trinity Repertory

Company, the Providence Performing Arts Center, the Rhode Island Philharmonic and Veterans Memorial Auditorium, and the Providence Civic Center. New artists and art groups were also attracted to or expanded in downtown. Private concert venues have been established in the arts and entertainment district. Efforts to make this area more pleasing and safe include the construction of the Weybosset Street Information and Security Station and the renovation of Mathewson Street, which, as the district's main spine, runs from the new Convention Center to the Providence Performing Arts Center.

These positive steps towards a vibrant city are being continued into the future by those who recognize the ongoing need for investment in Providence. The "Cultural Banner Trail", a true consortium of art, business, nonprofit, public sector, tourism, and hospitality groups, have worked together to package and promote the history, culture, performing arts, visual arts, entertainment and restaurant facilities of downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods, particularly the nationally recognized, historic "College Hill."

As well as creating guidebooks, maps, information centers, and computer data bases to educate people and inform them about events, the Cultural Banner Trail has put in place twelve sites for both indoor and outdoor art, a graphic street information system to help people locate various art and cultural opportunities, and an "Art Mart" which will allow over 100 artists and artisans to make, display, and sell their crafts and wares. Finally, the group will implement an integrated promotional program to link these new activities to existing ones.

Additional plans include the creation of more museums and of a movie theater complex within the arts and entertainment district. Providence will also encourage artists and help them thrive as business people through business training, marketing, and financial assistance in an effort to expand this district's success. ■

The Capital Center Project

A unique initiative was established about 15 years ago to capitalize on 72 acres of under-utilized land that existed between the State House and the remainder of downtown. This land was rail freight yards, old ponds, and parking lots. A master plan was conceived and approved in 1979, and a major public infrastructure and improvement project was initiated. This included relocation of rivers, the creation of new streets and highway interchanges and the development of a new major urban park called "Water Place Park."

During the past fifteen years, new construction completed as a result of the plan includes One Citizens Bank Plaza, the new Providence Station and relocated AMTRAK lines, American

Express Building, Center Place Condominiums, The Rhode Island Convention Center and adjacent parking garage, and many smaller but important activities.

The next step on the way to the creation of more attractive parcels was the relocation of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers. These two rivers meet near Kennedy Plaza in the heart of downtown Providence. That confluence is called the Providence River and flows directly between the Financial District and the East Side of the city towards the head of Narragansett Bay. As part of the Capital Center Development, the State of Rhode Island is constructing a major new park in downtown Providence. At the foot of Capital Hill, the Woonasquatucket River has been re-widened to form Water Place. This area will feature a basin and waterfall as its focal point and will anchor the northern end of a revitalized and relocated Downtown river system. The opening of the waterfront will encourage more pedestrian traffic in the downtown area and along the rivers.

Providence once had the dubious honor of being home to the world's widest bridge. The Providence River was covered by a traffic rotary known locally as "suicide circle." Now the infamous "bridge" has been almost completely removed. In its place are several new historicized bridges which conform to the pre-existing street pattern and which attempt to match the existing architectural fabric.

Presently under serious consideration is the development of a 900,000 sq. ft. retail center which includes a 5,000 car parking garage. The anchors for this retail center will be Macy's, Filene's, and Lord & Taylor. This development represents an opportunity to re-introduce retail activity into downtown Providence. The parking garage will also serve the entire downtown and help strengthen this area's ability to keep and attract companies and economic activity. Much is being done on linking this development with the remainder of Capital Center and of downtown to insure its full integration into these area.

Projects which are still under construction within the Capital Center district include the Westin Hotel, the Memorial Boulevard Extension, and the Riverwalks/Water Place Project. Approximately six large parcels remain available for residential, commercial, and office development; proposals to date include the Mall of New England / Providence Place, a Sheraton Hotel, and a restaurant at Water Place. Upon completion, Capital Center is expected to provide a million square feet of retail space, 2.5 million square feet of office space, 1,000 hotel rooms, 500 residential units, and 10,000 structured parking spaces. ■

The Downcity Plan

The Downcity area is the historic old retail and office core of downtown Providence, developed primarily in the 1800s. Beginning in the 1960s and extending to the present date, retail

activity began to diminish significantly. In the 1980s the office activity in the area began to diminish as well.

In 1991, the public sector, through the City of Providence, and the private sector, through the Providence Foundation, recognized the importance of a revitalization of their city's historic core and sponsored a planning effort led by the architect Andres Duany. Hundreds of volunteers participated in this effort, which resulted in a Downcity Master Plan. The completed study addresses elements such as circulation, parking, land use, architectural and design standards, physical improvements, and development standards, as well as addressing a specific section on arts and entertainment, social issues, and management. The Plan calls for reusing major retail/office space as housing on upper floors of historic buildings, arts and entertainment facilities, education and institutional sites, and specialty retail businesses. The City has begun implementation of some components of the plan, primarily street improvements and creation of parks and information stations. Investments have also been made to strengthen and increase the amount of art and entertainment programming in the area, as well as to strengthen existing educational institutions. The City Council officially approved the plan in June, 1994.

To further advance the redevelopment of this area, a new private sector group called the "Coalition for Community Development" (CCD) has formed. Its mission is to implement those catalytic private real estate projects which are planned for the area. As of June, 1994, they have raised approximately one-half million dollars from ten of the largest institutions and corporations in Rhode Island. They sponsored, along with the Providence Foundation, a Downcity Project Implementation Plan, also spearheaded by architect Andres Duany, which identified and analyzed those critical projects. The CCD is now implementing the proposed downtown cinema complex, the housing programs to stimulate the conversion of upper floors into housing, the new commercial buildings to fill critical gaps in downtown, and the "Art Mart" to allow Rhode Island and Providence artists to make, display and sell their wares.

The combination of all these efforts will lead to a completely revitalized older core. This strategic initiative is being accomplished through a co-sponsorship between the public and the private sector with a commitment, financial and otherwise, from both sectors to make this plan succeed. ■

The Waterfront Revitalization Effort

Although the city was originally founded and prospered because of its waterfront and waterways, by the 1950s Providence had turned its back on, ignored, and in fact covered over parts of its waterfront. In the early 1980s it was recognized that the waterfront could again

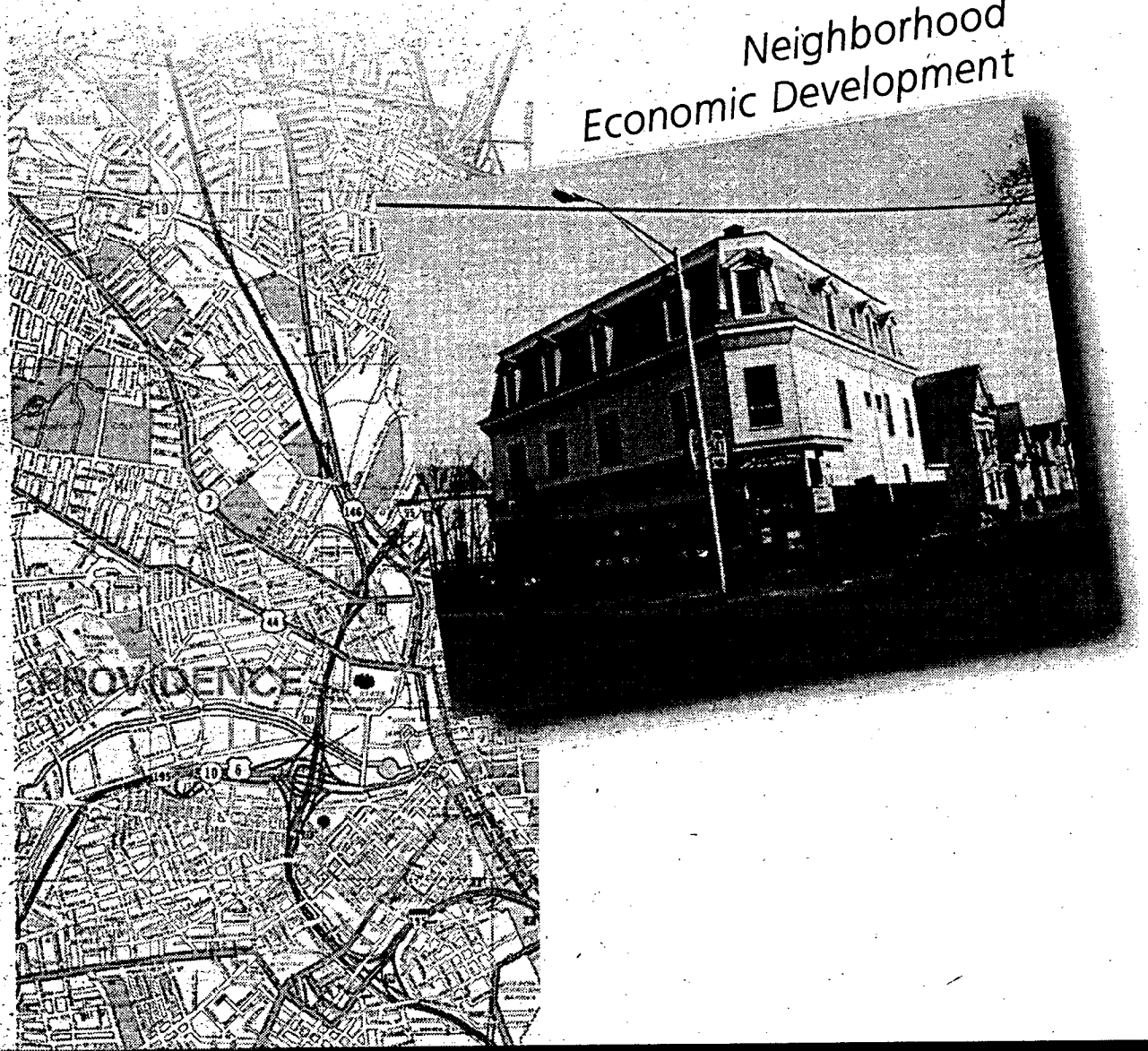
become a major asset of the city, and the restoration of the two main rivers in downtown began. The first part of this project was known as the "River Relocation Project." This project has created a "Y" shaped landscaped river corridor at the center of the city. The plan includes the Water Place Park, a four-acre urban park at the western terminus of the walkway system. There will be other urban parks along the waterway system with another primary park leading from the State Courthouse to the water in the lower college hill district of downtown. Boats can travel to and from the park at Water Place utilizing over three-quarters of a mile of downtown river channels. Over one and one-quarter miles of riverwalks are available for pedestrians and joggers. This project should be complete in another year.

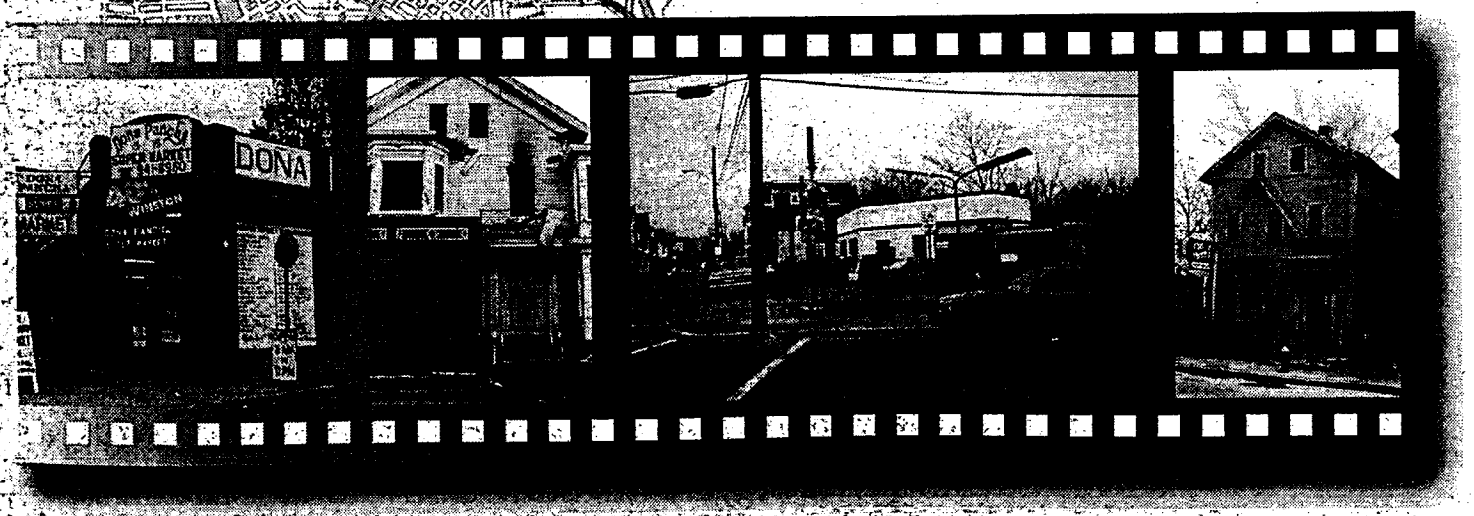
However, this is but half the story of the waterfront restoration effort in Providence. The next portion of the project consists of the Providence River, south of the Crawford Street bridge and extending to the hurricane barrier line which is the mouth of the Narragansett Bay. The Interstate 195 Highway needs to be rebuilt, relocated away from the downtown Providence waterfront area. This decision will allow the completion of the parkway, walkway, and bikeway system that has been initiated in Capital Center and in the mid-part of downtown. The additional two miles of riverwalks, boat landings, parks and plaza will replace current highway service roads. Sidewalks and streets in adjacent neighborhoods will once again lead to the water. Water taxis will travel from shore to shore and ferryboats will bring commuters and travelers into downtown.

The I-195 highway relocation will also create approximately 43 acres of land for redevelopment. Approximately 50 percent of this land is planned for parks and open space. Plans also include housing and commercial development especially designed to take full advantage of the waterfront and conform with the size and scale of existing surroundings. The project involves renovating three historic districts to their original condition prior to the intrusion of the Interstate Highway in 1950. Much of the development along the water will be limited to small seaport-like clusters.

This remarkable transformation of the Providence waterfront will take place over a 20-year period, and is about 50 percent complete. Its success is due to the reaching of consensus on goals, the support of the public and private sector, careful planning, and the creation of systems to insure that the plan is carried out. ■

Neighborhood Economic Development





Chapter 8
Neighborhood Economic Development

Vision Statement

Strong, neighborhood-based economic activity is an essential component of a healthy and livable city. Neighborhood businesses provide jobs for area residents and are a convenient source of goods and services. Distinctive businesses attract customers from other parts of the city and region. As a city of well-defined neighborhoods, with excellent accessibility, historic charm, and extensive waterfront, Providence will continue to offer multiple opportunities for jobs and shopping throughout its neighborhoods.

To sustain these opportunities, a broad-based public-private partnership will be undertaken to plan and finance neighborhood economic development, train workers, and develop citywide business cooperation. City government will take a lead role by developing economic development plans for each neighborhood in the city. Neighborhood businesses should be incorporated into a larger scheme of integrated neighborhood land use determined by a community-driven planning process. Broad in conception, neighborhood plans will encourage local businesses to work with community schools and family centers to establish job networks for students and adults. They will also encourage entrepreneurship at the local level by promoting business incubators and other support services for new economic activities. In the future, neighborhood business will continue to be a major component of the quality of life in Providence.

The ethnic diversity of Providence's neighborhoods can and should be promoted to attract consumers from outside the city. Coordinated, ethnic-based marketing strategies for Providence neighborhoods have proven successful in the past and should be expanded to each of Providence's twenty-four distinct neighborhoods. The cultural make-up of Providence's neighborhoods should be represented on the numerous arterial roads and commercial strips. In that way both the local population and those from beyond the neighborhood boundaries will benefit.

Context

Providence has long-recognized the importance of its neighborhood commercial strips. In fact nearly half of the city's neighborhoods are named for the corresponding commercial strip that runs through it. There are more than 50 commercial strips running through 25 Providence neighborhoods. Before the numerous "shopping centers" were constructed, these commercial strips provided for all the nearby community needs from groceries to clothing to professional services.

Efforts at redeveloping these strips have been prevalent though inconsistent. Some of the earliest attempts at revitalization focused on commercial districts used federal Urban Renewal funds. These efforts were made on Point Street in the old Jewelry District in 1951, and on Willard Avenue in 1953. The Lippitt Hill project (1959) resulted in another neighborhood shopping center, competing with the newly developing suburban shopping centers, located outside Providence. In 1966, the city began an ambitious effort at urban development with the East Side Renewal Project that included Randall Square and South Main Street. These efforts could neither slow nor replace the flight of capital which occured during the 1960s.

The City then began to focus its economic development efforts away from the residential neighborhoods. Two industrial parks, West River and Huntington, were built to create manufacturing jobs. Additionally other efforts focused primarily on residential projects. In 1977, the city again turned back to neighborhood commerce with the Federal Hill project, a dramatic concentration of resources largely considered a success. Between 1979 and 1983, seven of ten development efforts were focused on neighborhood commercial strips while the focus of revitalization began to shift towards improving the downtown area. Towards the middle and late 1980s, the neighborhood commercial strips were considered secondary to the new Capital Center and Rail Relocation projects then underway adjacent to the downtown core.

In the 1990s, the strategy of investing in neighborhood commercial strips, has reappeared, though on a more modest scale. Although this type of strategic planning does not require overwhelming financial resources, it does require a significant reorientation of the relevant resources and agencies. Major funding streams do not promote neighborhood development in any sense; their orientation is towards big businesses and centralization. Small Business Administration loans are much too large to help small, start-up businesses, typical of Providence neighborhoods. To alleviate that complaint, the SBA, the Ocean State Business Development Authority and numerous banks have pledged $13.1 million in loans between $5,000 and $50,000 for small businesses.

In attempting to reach the goal of revitalized commercial and retail streets, the Providence Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) has made a number of loans to small businesses, which either exist or are being located in Providence. During fiscal year 1993, the PEDC made approximately 62 loans. The majority of the loans were made to existing businesses in the Federal Hill and Downtown areas, allowing them to create and retain jobs. Over the course of the year, $4 million was lent to neighborhood businesses, 496 jobs were created and 568 jobs were retained. In conjunction with this effort, the Department of Planning & Development has done recent neighborhood retail revitalization projects in the Smith Hill and Fox Point neighborhoods, but the vast majority of the neighborhoods have been untreated for some time and need attention.

Voices from the Community

There was an overall sense among many *ProVision* participants that one of the largest needs was compassionate and progressive leadership in government and in the community. Decision making by city and state government should be based on a rational and accountable basis. These decisions should be discussed and made openly. There should be sufficient political will to help the poorest Providence residents. Funding for neighborhood economic development should be on a need basis rather than a system where the neighborhoods that need assistance most are the last to be helped.

There was also a sense that something needs to be done to stop the flight of capital from Providence's neighborhoods to the suburban community. The disinvestment in Providence's neighborhoods continues at an alarming rate. Many retail options in downtown Providence and on the commercial streets have disappeared and relocated at huge suburban malls and in the strip malls of the sprawling streets in the metropolitan ring communities.

"We need neighborhood home rule to meet our own needs and to do things right. In the neighborhoods, we know what it takes to fix things, let us do it."

— An Upper South Providence resident

"Every student who chooses not to go to college should have an opportunity to gain marketable skills in high school."

— A Providence resident

"We demand full employment and assurance that these jobs will carry a living wage!!!"

— A Providence resident

"I find it hard to think that I'm gonna to take a job where I gotta travel an hour each way for less than $6 an hour. I need a good job I can walk to."

— A Providence resident

"An area often forgotten is the neighborhood commercial area. While small, these neighborhood commercial areas service the adjacent residential areas. Over the past decades, we have seen these areas grow and expand when the economy was strong and slowly deteriorate in bad economic times. When the economy is strong, we see many requests for waivers to the zoning ordinance to expand into residential zones or to intensify commercial uses. As a result of these requests, neighborhood commercial areas are often expanded without taking into consideration the impact on the adjacent residential areas and the economic well being of the commercial area."

— Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan

Strategies

Because of the strong regional, national and global economic and social trends that affect Providence, it is a near impossible task to identify a short, precise list of key needs to promote neighborhood economic development. Massive public and private disinvestment in many of Providence's neighborhoods, federal deregulation of banks, strip-malls, and warehouse shopping in low-cost suburbs like Seekonk, Warwick and Cranston are just two of the forces which are forcing Providence to reevaluate its approach to the neighborhood commercial strip. There are some things that the city can do on its own as first steps.

1. ***Rethink the nature of commercial strips.*** Given the changing face of American cities in general and of Providence in particular, no effective and concerted effort at neighborhood economic development can or should take place before a neighborhood by neighborhood strategy is developed. Such a strategy should identify the local consumer base, community needs, skills and existing businesses. With this information, a long term plan can address the needs of the community in the context of other business districts and attempt to market an area's skills and ethnicity.

   In order to accomplish this task, it is necessary to develop an overall plan as to how commercial strips should be reconceived on a regional level. Then, plans can be implemented for each specific neighborhood which should respect and reflect the needs of each neighborhood. To this point, we do not have a complete set of neighborhood economic development plans for the distinct neighborhoods in the city. Those plans which do exist are often old and lack relevancy.

Next Steps

- Establish small and micro-business incubators in neighborhoods to support new business creation. Especially target minority entrepreneurial opportunities. Loans need to be made to those who desire smaller, non-traditional loans on a citywide basis.
- Develop supermarkets on neighborhood commercial strips. Neighborhood money should circulate within the area through employing nearby residents. Local stores could serve as an anchor to a retail strip.
- Provide more of a mall atmosphere with visible beat cops and lots of people shopping on arterial streets. Public safety was raised as an extremely important issue in the viability of any commercial strip. There was a direct correlation between the feeling of safety in the elderly population and the success of businesses on the arterial streets. The elderly are afraid to walk down the block after noon; therefore, they go to malls.
- Encourage entertainment facilities on these streets to provide needed pedestrians. There is a cyclical relationship in neighborhood economic development. Because few people walk up and down the arterial shopping, it does not appear safe and there is less variety in the types of stores and shops. But without safety and variety, there will not be a critical mass of shoppers.
- Address issues regarding the nature of commercial strips. A neighborhood commercial strip should be focused on attracting visitors from other areas in and outside of Providence and, more importantly, should serve the neighborhood residents by providing the goods and services they need, such as groceries, a dentist, a pharmacist, a movie theater, and various other uses.

- Identify and attract a targeted customer-base be it from the suburbs or from the neighborhoods, the customer base should be actively pursued.

2. ***Promote district and citywide business cooperation.*** There are definite advantages to district and citywide business communication. The ongoing commercial success of Federal Hill and the recent rejuvenation of Wickenden Street are excellent examples of the advantages small businesses gain when working together. Certainly the convenient location of a diverse group of businesses draws consumers to an area. Cooperation can also work to offset the added costs of doing business in the city. Shared advertising lowers the cost of outreach. Unified opening and closing times are convenient and promotes a safe environment. Citywide communication can also increase the political power of small businesses so that common obstacles are addressed.

   Because Providence's neighborhoods are largely ethnically based, commercial networks should attempt to tie into ethnic-based networks. This will improve consumer/business communications, so that commercial areas are culturally responsive and sensitive. Currently, there are many instances where the businesses within the neighborhoods are owned, operated and employ those from outside the city.

   Next Steps

   - Implement a marketing program between areas within the city, between the city and the rest of the state, and between the city and its neighborhoods and the rest of the United States.
   - Maintain a tracking system in order to have an accurate list of vacant commercial or industrial buildings. That way, any business interested in locating in Providence or attempting to stay within Providence could access the type of space that they need. This list could be compiled by an entity that was connected to the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development and the Chamber of Commerce. The list should also be accompanied by the vacant and abandoned housing and lots list which could be a tool in lot assemblage for large uses.

     Include the numerous large industrial parks in this process. They need to be addressed somehow in that they could be used as incubators or facilities for new manufacturing or employment for neighborhood residents. These sites need to be examined for new possibilities, vacancies should be tracked and all amenities (e.g. parking, lot size, equipment, transportation access) should be tracked in order to better supply new business with location options.
   - Create a progressive taxing system to assist small businesses. City and State government should begin to shift the business tax burden from small employers to large employers.

3. **Develop a technical support network.** Business networks should also be a conduit for technical support. Many entrepreneurs with good ideas need ongoing advice on how to run a business. Some needs are basic "how-to's;" effective bookkeeping, marketing strategies, etc. The process of navigating regulations, applying for licensing, and pursuing loan opportunities offered through federal, state and local governments is also a complicated and time-consuming endeavor. A technical support network would coordinate the dissemination of this information, so that owners can spend more time improving their businesses. The need for a technical support network for neighborhood business is especially pressing because of the language and cultural barriers faced by minority business owners.

Next Steps

- Eliminate cumbersome bureaucratic barriers to business improvement. The permitting process is inefficient and those who wish to open businesses must pass through an inordinate number of hoops. At the same time, the funding streams designed to assist new businesses are cumbersome and often inaccessible. The money is often spent on existing entities which create very few jobs.
- Have the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce work more closely with the neighborhood business associations and especially with the various minority business entities such as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Laotian Chamber of Commerce.

4. ***Identify and develop a ready local labor pool/ Develop a job network.*** Small businesses cannot exist successfully without qualified and reliable employees, but they alone can not be expected to recruit and train. Businesses must be connected to community centers, schools, churches and other community institutions. Ties between big businesses and the school system are proceeding through vehicles like the Youth Fair Chance grant. Attention must also be given to small businesses. Though they may not require large numbers of highly trained employees, they certainly stand to benefit from working with job training and apprenticeship programs.

   The mutual benefit of these ties is obvious. Businesses get good employees and develop strong local ties which should work to improve businesses. Residents, especially youths, get jobs and gain necessary work experience. A stable business community is an vital social asset to neighborhoods.

   "One stop shopping" for small businesses is necessary. A statutory independent ombudsman to handle small business - government conflicts would ease the bureaucratic burden on businesspeople. This ombudsman would also be resonsible for leading potential business owners through the necessary procedures. At the federal level, an Enterprise Community ombudsman should also be appointed.

Next Steps

- Create more businesses on local arterial streets designed to employ youth. Very few 14-, 15- and 16- year-olds have a chance to bag groceries at the market or to apprentice at stores and shops near their homes or near their schools. Without these places, there is little chance that youth will develop the "working" attitude at an early age.
- Distribute significantly more job training funds to small, neighborhood businesses. Much of the job training funds are distributed to large employers. Little money trickles down to the employment of youths within their own neighborhoods.
- Use set asides in the awarding of all contracts by the Providence Plan Housing Corporation to build capacity in minority construction and rehabilitation businesses. They should have some type of system where strictly local people are used in order to make them accountable to the folks the houses are built for and also to allow them to build their networking and marketing capabilities.

5. ***Increase financial support from government and local financial / lending institutions.*** Banks should also be pressured to improve upon their community reinvestment activities, especially in the commercial sector. Either banks do "boutique" funding which spreads out money too thinly to be effective, or the loans they are willing to give are too large to be of practical use.

Next Steps

- Develop alternative financial institutions, credit unions, revolving community funds, to assist small businesses ventures. There needs to be a greater number of commercial lenders in Providence neighborhoods which are willing to make smaller loans.
- Float a bond issue. Have the city or the state float one of these large bond issues (even similar to the TIF program for the $26 million issue for the PPHC) for the purposes of assisting neighborhood economic development.
- Change the current regional banking policy to become more focused on disadvantaged communities. The system in places encourages the regionalization of capital and disinvestment in the inner city.

Assets and Opportunities

A significant, untapped resource is Providence's institutions of higher education. There are a number of institutions in the city which have programs that would be of tremendous benefit to economic development. Their departments of marketing, business, and economics can provide technical assistance to small businesses. A conduit should be established to encourage higher education to invest its financial, intellectual and personal resources in community development and connect their resources to community needs.

A highly preferred means of promoting business ties to the community in terms of hiring is putting City pressure on new businesses, such as the Westin Hotel agreement. Similar pressure should be brought to bear for neighborhood economic development. The pressure could come in the form of a demonstration of how important it is for businesses to have a stable and employed residential base in the surrounding neighborhood.

Industrial Park Development

Huntington Industrial Park

In the 1960s, the Providence Redevelopment Agency developed the Huntington Industrial Park for large lot, large scale development. In the early days of the park, it was highly successful; although in the late 1980s with the consolidation of industry, the park began to suffer loss of industry and loss of jobs. The Redevelopment Agency took steps at that time to change the development restrictions to allow subdivisions of buildings and lots and to expand the types of uses that would be allowed over the last five years. Five new businesses, similar to the typical jewelry firms that located in the park in the early 1960s, have moved in and renovated the existing structures, expanding the City job base.

Silver Spring Industrial Park

In 1983 in conjunction with the Providence & Worcester Railroad, a strip of land along the Interstate 95 corridor at the North End of the City was acquired and developed into a 15 lot industrial park. Since the parks completion in 1988, four parcels have been sold and developed. Four more are under contract and three are in negotiation. Recently, a regional department store chain decided to build a large store on one of the parcels, creating a "mixed-use" area.

The Former Gorham Manufacturing Site

It is the intention of the City of Providence to transform the historic 37 acre Gorham site into an Industrial Park. There are a number of huge historic buildings on the site including a train depot and worker recreation areas. The necessary improvements to the site include the

remediation of all hazardous and toxic materials, demolition and site improvements. An investigation conducted by T.L. Associates: Environmental Consultants revealed that PCB contaminants, leaking underground fuel tanks, buried drums containing toxic waste, and solid waste along the banks of the cove had contaminated the site. Under an agreement between the City of Providence and Textron, Inc., which was entered into on January 10, 1994, Textron, as the previous owner, has agreed to assume all costs for clean-up of the soil and ground water contamination. In order to make access and egress to the site more conductive to this large industrial site, the City is proposing to acquire a 52,000 sq ft parcel of abutting real estate.

Presently, the city is developing a comprehensive plan to create the Gorham Employment Center. Once developed, the Gorham Employment Center will support a workforce of more than 1,000 individuals, eliminate the blight that this large facility presented in its unimproved condition, and create an environmentally safe industrial park for the neighborhood and business community.

Development of the Port of Providence

The Providence Industrial Waterfront is the location of many large scale business and facilities of critial importance to the City and region. It provides deep water access to Narragansett Bay and beyond. Here, at the Providence Industrial Waterfront, trucks, freight trains, tankers and cargo ships converge, transporting an array of raw materials The City's recently completed Comprehensive Plan and amended Zoning Ordinance strongly support reinforcing the Port's industrial land use pattern. A plan presently under consideration is either to sell the Port to the State of Rhode Island Port Authority which would create a single operational entity for the State's Quonset Port facility and City's, or in the alternative, sell the Port to private investors. Either option, it is believed, will result in the creation of a stronger facility.

There are other industrial areas in Providence including The Foundry / CIC Complex, West River Industrial Park; the Bucklin, Cranston and Dexter Streets area; Olneyville Square and Providence Industrial Park. ■

Minority Investment Development Corporation

The Minority Investment Development Corporation (MIDC) represents an exciting and innovative collaborative effort to meet the entrepreneurial needs of Rhode Island's disadvantaged and minority communities. MIDC officially opened for business in January of 1994, and was created as a direct result of the combined efforts of Providence African-American community leaders, the Chamber of Commerce, local financial institutions, corporations, the federal Small Business Administration (SBA), government agencies, and consulting firms.

MIDC's purpose is to contribute positively to the quality of life of individuals, enhance the general social welfare, and create economic growth in the State of Rhode Island by making loans to and equity investments in the state's minority business enterprises (MBEs) or in companies controlled or operated by socially and/or economically disadvantaged group members as defined by the SBA. Its goals are to:

- Develop minority entreprenuership
- Strengthen existing minority businesses
- Develop quality minority business opportunities
- Enhance opportunities for minorities to meaningfully participate in the marketplace

While MIDC is a for-profit corporation which is capitalized by banks, corporations, foundations, and government agencies, the agency has recently formed the Rhode Island Coalition for Minority Investment (RICMI), which is currently seeking 501(c)3 status from the IRS. RICMI will provide educational, technical, and administrative support for MBEs.

To date, MIDC has raised $1.75 million in capital, and has made loans to five companies totaling $365,000. This money has leveraged an additional $165,000 from other lending sources, translating into $530,000 in total credit for minority businesses in Rhode Island. Approximately 50 new jobs have been created as a result of these loans. In addition, MIDC has provided technical assistance to over 30 applicants. ■

Providence Economic Development Corporation

The Providence Economic Development Loan Program (PEDC), a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt CDC, administered by the City's Department of Planning and Development, provides financial assistance to both large and small commercial and industrial companies within the city's neighborhoods.

PEDC's program is self-sustaining, drawing its revenue from loan interest payments, with all administrative overhead cost assumed by the Department of Planning and Development. Directed by an eleven member board, PEDC administers a loan portfolio in excess of $6 million. Since its inception in 1978, over 300 businesses have received assistance that they would have not qualified for conventionally. In fact, since January of 1991, over 475 new jobs have been created and 657 jobs retained; of the 85 businesses assisted, 10 have been minority owned and 16 female owned. The program places priority on assisting the city neighborhood commercial precincts in order to maximize neighborhood stability.

A participating business can receive a loan of up to $125,000 with a maximum repayment term of 10 years. Interest rates vary and are based on ability to repay. The PEDC Loan Program has established itself as an important community development tool and has assumed a significant role in helping to stabilize and improve neighborhood business conditions.

The continued success of the PEDC program depends on capitalizing the portfolio. Presently this program secures, through repayment of existing loans, portfolio growth at approximately $60,000 per month; this coupled with an additional contribution of $500,000 $700,000 yearly through the city's CDBG Entitlement Program provides a yearly operating budget of between $1.2 and 1.4 Million Dollars. Every dollar of PEDC assistance ordinarily leverages private / bank equity of 2-3 dollars. This results in total program impact of nearly $4 million in business investment yearly.

The significant demand for financial help from small business operators cannot presently be met because of insufficient local resources. In light of the city's present inability to meet this need and with an eye toward creating a sustainable environment for business development, the Department of Planning and Development will apply for a $5 Million Dollar section 108 Guarantee Loan from HUD which will be utilized to recapitalize the revolving loan fund portfolio. ■

Elmwood NHS

Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Service was founded 14 years ago primarily as a housing rehab and construction association whose goal was to increase the percentage of neighborhood owner-occupants. In the last three years, they have ventured into neighborhood economic development with two new programs to meet the training and financing needs of micro and small businesses.

The commercial program's revolving loan fund provides limited financing to small business owners who could not obtain conventional financing for repairs, expansion or modernization. Elmwood NHS is the only non-profit to provide such a service in the state. Additionally technical assistance is also provided to new and potential business operations.

Elmwood NHS also inititated the state's first and only microbusiness project, based on the successful peer lending model made famous in Bangladesh. The peer groups consist of four to seven home-based entreprenprenuers who grant loans to group members, accessing capital from a master loan fund. All members of the group must endorse the loan and all are held responsible for its repayment in cases of default.

The program currently supports about 40 microbusinesses from the five neighborhoods surrounding and including Elmwood. Members of each group receive technical assistance and

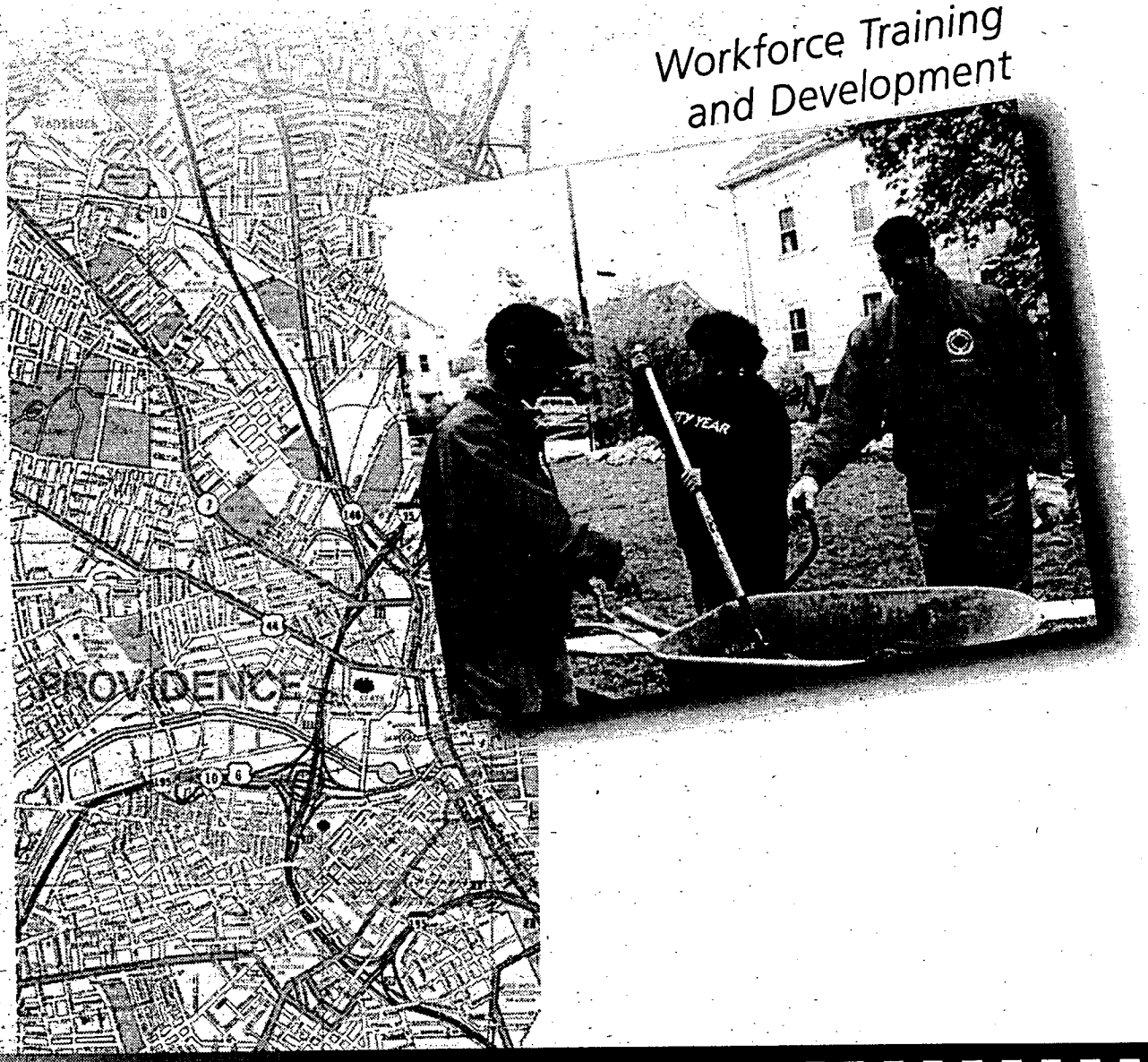
training in marketing and finance. Most of the participants are minorities, some are experienced entrepreneurs, but all have been shut out of the traditional lending market because they lack collateral or credit.

The typical loan starts at $300 and can, in a series of steps, reach as a much as $10,000. Administration of the program is supported by funds from the state, banks, foundations, Rhode Island LISC and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corp., the primary funding agency for all NHS programs.

Overall both programs have been successful, creating over 50 new jobs for the area. The commercial loans have gone to a wide range of businesses including a car wash, an ethnic chicken and pizza store, a temporary hiring service, a laundry, a minority-owned ice-cream store and a beauty supply firm. The micro-business ventures include computer services, catering, construction, day care, clothing design and retail sales.

Elmwood NHS has plans to expand in a variety of ways. They intend to create three economic incubators, small commercial centers that will offer affordable rents and business services to micro and growing businesses. The first incubator is scheduled to open by the end of the summer. They would also like to become limited partners in businesses that will bring new goods and services to Elmwood. ■

Workforce Training and Development



Chapter 9
Workforce Training

Vision Statement

A well-trained workforce is essential to the long term economic and social success of Providence. Skilled workers will both retain jobs and attract business and industry to Providence. They will also have access to the stable and well-paying jobs necessary to break out permanently from the cycle of poverty and dependency. Creating such a workforce requires comprehensive training which both prepares youth for the workplace and retrains adults who have lost their jobs and subsequently require new skills.

Providence's existing assets and resources make it a natural center for several industries. Health services and medical technology, tourism, arts, culture and entertainment, and higher education all have a niche in the city's employment landscape. Providence public schools, its seven institutions of higher education and existing job training programs will work in conjunction with the private sector to provide training which is appropriate to the employment needs of these areas. Our city has a responsibility to provide stable, well-paying jobs for those that we train, and we must actively work to expand our job base in conjunction with improving our training efforts. Targeting our training resources to our economic strengths will match these resources to our most pressing needs.

Workforce training in Providence faces some unique challenges. Our significant immigrant population requires language and cultural training as part of workforce training. We must be sensitive to the needs of newcomers and strive to enhance their unique skills and assets in our economy. Also, large and small businesses alike have expressed the desire that workforce training be more than narrow skills training. Effective programs must develop the interpersonal skills, life skills, motivation and reliability of people so that they are prepared for the working environment. The skills and mind sets will translate into employability. Workforce training in Providence will be designed with a recognition that employability is more essential than skills training and must also include preparing the individual to assume a responsible position in the workforce, a concept often unfamiliar to many of our least employable target area residents.

The Context

There is a growing need to develop both lifelong and continuous learning whether in the schools or in business and industry. This learning must take place with those in a changing workforce, those left out of the workforce, and with the large numbers of recently arrived immigrants.

The Providence/Cranston Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is the largest workforce training organization in the city. Although JTPA does not operate programs itself, virtually all entities that provide training programs in Providence do so under the auspices of JTPA. The changing characteristics of JTPA's clientele provide a striking commentary on the training needs of immigrants and newly arrived city residents. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of whites served by JTPA decreased by 10%, while blacks increased by 15.7%, Hispanics increased by 181.4% and Asians by 230%.

JTPA Training and Placement
1992 Program Year

	Adult	*Youth*	*EDWAA**	*Total*
Number enrolled in program	329	333	137	799
Number completed program	189	285	113	587
Number entering employment	116	69	59	244
Percent of those completing program who enter employment	61.3	24.2	52.2	41.6
Percent of those originally enrolled who enter employment	35.3	20.7	43.1	30.5

*EDWAA: Economic Dislocated Workers Adjustment and Assistance Act

As it is presently structured, training, especially JTPA, cannot be completely responsive to Providence's emerging new vision for workforce training.

- JTPA legislation enacted in 1982 and reinforced by amendments in 1993 expressly forbids the pairing of job creation and job training
- JTPA funding has decreased over the past ten years, while the federal government has mandated that they serve an increasingly disadvantaged population
- JTPA's focus as a human resource investment program has emphasized longer term training, resulting in fewer total clients being served. This has also led to the perception at the local level that JTPA has de-emphasized hard skills training in favor of basis skills preparedness. The specific skills training, however, is now done by businesses with the JTPA support.
- There are a myriad of conflicting programs within the education, employment, and training system (such as JTPA, the DHS Pathways to Independence program, Food

Stamps, Adult Education, Vocational Education, and Dislocated Worker Training), each with different requirements, standards, and emphases.

- The local labor market is reflective of national tendencies including the shift from manufacturing to a service economy, and the fear that cyclical unemployment is giving way to structural unemployment. This has led to the need for training that adjusts to the skill sets required in the new economy. Very little has been done in terms of assessing and marketing the skills of Providence residents. The shift towards a service economy has left many Providence residents undertrained for new jobs. Therefore, these jobs are going to better trained workers from outside Providence and from out of state. Providence residents need to be able to compete for these jobs.
- The global market demands that local skill levels remain high to keep up with the competition.

Under state law, the *Providence/Cranston Regional Employment and Training Board (RETB)* reviews all relevant training plans developed by the Department of Employment and Training , Department of Education Carl Perkins and Adult Education plans, and Department of Human Services plans. The RETB is a business-led group that distributes JTPA funds as well as national, state, and local discretionary funding. It has developed excellent relationships with local high performance businesses through marketing grants (including JTPA and Supportive Work) to firms for competitiveness improvement, Total Quality Management, and upgrade/retraining of existing workers. RETB has also been in the forefront of developing School to Work planning and implementation.

Voices from the Community

Large and small employers have expressed through the community-based strategic planning process and employers surveys that interpersonal, verbal and communication skills are the most important qualities they look for in employees. They also felt these skills were the most lacking in Providence residents and suggested that secondary school programs develop student knowledge of occupations, skills in career planning, and attitudes toward work.

In a 1993 survey by the Rhode Island Occupational Coordinating Committee, all responding employers indicated a need for training employees, but less then half felt they were fully meeting their training needs through current programs. The most important needs were for training in organization, new technology, and developing the skills of new employees. Cost was cited as the greatest barrier in meeting training needs.

Many employers in this survey also indicated that are willing to hire immigrants. One-fourth considered immigrants easy to train and possessing of good skills and work habits. They pointed out the particular need for language training for non-native English speakers.

The Community Task Force on Workforce Training expressed concern that existing job training programs, such as JTPA, must operate under too many regulations to address effectively the needs of employers and employees. They also identified higher educational institutions as an extensive untapped resource which could be used to meet the city's training needs.

"Yesterday I called JTPA to try to get into a nursing assistant program, but they told me they wouldn't have anything starting for five months. I can't afford the training on my own, but I can't get into to programs anywhere."

- Unemployed male, 24 years old

"I requested training for re-entry (into the workforce), but they don't have anything available. Now it's middle management that's being affected, particularly people 45 to 55 years old."

- Unemployed professional

"The needs of every child should be met. Work ethic should be part of the educational process of every child. Coordinate the workforce training incorporating 'self-skills' and workplace expectations."

-Task force participant

"Adult education is a key link to self-sufficiency and the state does not put enough money into it."

- Steering committee member

Strategies

1. ***Incorporate basic and life skills in job training.*** Many companies prefer to train employees in specific skills on-site. Job training programs must, therefore, provide people with a strong background in basic skills necessary to be employable, such as math, reading, writing, computer literacy. They also need to develop the interpersonal and life skills necessary in the workplace.

   ### Next Steps

   - Determine a comprehensive basic skills package that all students should have when they graduate. This should be developed by the Providence school system and the private sector in conjunction with the State Department of Education as they determine outcome-based standards for the 21st century as part of statewide comprehensive education reform.
   - Develop an active large business to small business to school job network to facilitate the school to work transition. The employer network should become the source for work experience for students while in school and job placement upon graduation. Schools should take the lead role in connecting with businesses, especially local ones, to provide beginning work opportunities for students in school.
   - Provide workplace literacy and job skill training to students as early as seventh grade. Current job curricula begin in the tenth grade. Public-private partnerships between schools and business should implement programs which strive to develop positive attitude towards work during the impressionable middle school years.

2. ***Target workforce training programs to expanding industries.*** Education efforts must work in concert with Providence's emerging economic vision so that the city can offer a workforce able to achieve that vision.

   ### Next Steps

   - Improve outreach to consumers, businesses and the community when evaluating training programs. An overall sentiment exists that the good programs tend to go unfunded while the ineffectual programs seem to last forever. Evaluation should be based on how well programs coordinate training with local workplace needs expressed by businesses.
   - Require new businesses to give priority to qualified Providence residents for newly created jobs.
   - Promote state-city-private sector partnerships so Providence has a unique role in the state-wide economic development vision and does not compete with other cities and towns.
   - Create a mechanism which connects trained workers and qualified graduates with appropriate jobs. This could be coordinated by the local Regional Employment Training Board and Private Industry Councils.
   - Focus on identifying and supporting entrepreneurs, especially in the growing arts and culture and medical technology industries.

3. ***Expand the definition of workplaces to include higher education non-profit institutions as providers of workforce training.*** Providence's seven institutions of higher education are a great asset to the city. They should be utilized as much as possible.

Next Steps

- Use local hospitals as a training ground for the medical technology industry. Use higher education facilities and programs to provide free computer classes and training to Providence residents.
- Use tourism in Providence as a source of entry level jobs to give people experience in the workforce. Johnson & Wales University should be an active participant in training a service industry workforce to support Providence's efforts to become a tourist and convention destination.

4. ***Create a seamless web of training opportunities so that the needs of all segments of the population are met.*** Different job training programs have different restrictions and requirements. Increase communication and coordination between these programs, with effective referral and networking will prevent unemployed workers and workers who need on the job training from falling through the cracks of the system.

Next Steps

- Develop one-stop shopping center for jobs within each neighborhood and connect them to training and employment programs. This could be run through the community centers or through neighborhood-based organizations. This program will have a bulletin board where all available neighborhood jobs are posted and where all training program openings are listed. This list would have to be comprehensive in scope and all inclusive.
- Market JTPA and other job training programs more aggressively so that more people can take advantage of them. Newspapers and television should regularly announce programs openings and start dates.
- Develop a needs-based standardized RFP process for all federal job training programs so that they can address expressed needs of employers.
- Develop training programs targeted for immigrants. A job skills training component should be included in Providence's proposed Newcomer School for immigrants so that children receive training and can in turn connect their families to the job network.

Assets and Opportunities

Rhode Island Department of Employment and Training has created the Providence Employment Resource Center for residents of the Providence/Cranston area in order to provide better service and to avoid duplication of services. The ERC's services will include evaluating claims, testing, assisting the job search process and facilitating readjustment to the workplace.

The Providence Carl Perkins Design Committee has been meeting to develop planning for $950,000 of federal resources. The team is completely redesigning the area vocational school (located in the proposed Enterprise Community) so that it will reflect a School to Work philosophy. As conceived, the Hanley Vocational School will become a local career and technical skills center that will meet community and business needs during late afternoons and early evenings.

The Hospitals and Universities Consortium, a cooperative effort of 10 Providence universities and hospitals, has announced a dozen new programs totaling over $1 million to help the city of Providence. The effort, primarily designed to boost the city's educational system, will also enhance the career training for Providence students. Particularly notable is the initiative associated with the city's strong medical institutions to prepare individuals for health care careers.

Providence Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency Program is a five-year program designed to support the move from welfare to work by providing incentives to transient low-income families. Traditionally as public housing tenants increased their income due to earned wages, their rent would also increase along with an increase in daycare and transportation costs and a decrease in welfare and food stamps. Under this program, the rent differential will be accumulated by the authority in the tenant's name and returned following the successful completion of the program.

Rhode Island Area Coalition for Excellence was established in 1992 to develop quality awards similar to the national Baldrige Awards. Local workforce development planners have been working with this group to assist in developing standards which might be utilized by local training, education, and business participants in building continuous improvement and an emphasis on quality across a variety of workforce development areas.

Youth Fair Chance

In March 1994, the Providence School Department in partnership with the Providence/Cranston JTPA applied for demonstration project funding through the Department of Labor to develop a neighborhood-based school-to-work transition model. Youth Fair Chance strives to close the gap between schools, students and employers by providing in-school and out-of-school youth with the training and support that will lead to access to the job market. Training will take place in job-specific clusters which focus intensively on the skills necessary for employment in jobs in addition to the total-quality management skills which businesses expect in all employees. The central programs of the Youth Fair Chance model project include:

In-School Programs

Academy for Business Careers. Planned for Central High School, the academy will offer students a four-year course to prepare them for a career in business. In addition to challenging core academic requirements, career exploration and exposure, and job counseling, students will receive specialized training in either information processing, accounting, or secretarial skills.

Chamber of Commerce School to Work Transition Academy. This joint venture between the School Department and the Greater Provident Chamber of Commerce will strengthen the ongoing business/education partnership through technology-based learning in small teaching units. Each student will have an Education Career Advisor to coordinate the student educational program with life skills and career awareness instruction. Business professionals will provide classroom instruction and local companies will encourage career exploration through job shadowing

Academy for Automotive Integrated Technologies. The currently outdated Auto Mechanics/Auto Body program at Central Vocational High School will be reorganized and updated. The program will integrate traditional academic disciplines with technical training and business skill training. School to work transition will operate by a supervised case management approach that will develop strong relationships between the student, family, school and business.

Middle School Programs. Youth Fair Chance will implement a career development stand in the middle school curriculum to provide students in grades 6 through 8.

Out-of-School Programs

The needs of community youth/young adults that have dropped out of school without having acquired the skills needed for gainful employment will be met through Youth Fair Chance Skills Center located at the Hanley Vocational/Technical Center in the Central/Classical High School complex. The Skills Center will be open weekday evenings and to the greatest extent possible use the facilities and resources which already exist in the center.

Competency based alternate high school diplomas will be offered in six cluster areas: automotive, graphics, hospitality/travel and tourism/food service, machine science, community/police/fire, and business. The Skills Center will also offer a Building/Enviro cluster based on the Youthbuild model to capitalize on the extensive downtown development and neighborhood construction now occurring in Providence. Classes will be supported by a new

career information center, automated case management in collaboration with Providence JTPA and RETB, health and day care services, parenting and life skills classes, and a language lab. ■

Rhode Island Skills Commission

America has been building an economy that relies on low skills and low wages. This has led to a decrease in productivity and real income. This disturbing trend was documented in *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages*, the 1990 report of the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce.

In 1991, the Rhode Island Skills Commission was created to examine how the *America's Choice* agenda could be implemented in Rhode Island. The commission consists of more than 175 volunteers from education, business, labor, government and social service organizations. In 1992, they issued a report entitled *Rhode Island: High Skills or Low Wages — An Invitation to Act* which presents five proposals to meet the challenges facing the state.

1. *The certificate of initial mastery.* The Commission proposes that new educational standards be set for all Rhode Island students. Students would work toward these standards at their own pace, passing a series of performance-based assessments throughout their school years. After the student received the Certificate of Initial Mastery(CIM), a requirement for a high school diploma, they would have the option to enter a college preparatory, technical or vocational course of study.

2. The Commission recommends a consistent commitment to educate all students and recover students who drop out of school. All students need to be given support necessary to stay in school and achieve high standards while there. Community based learning centers can be created for those outside of the education system who want to attain a CIM and a diploma.

3. The Commission also recommends establishing three- to four-year programs that lead to professional certification in occupations not requiring a bachelor's degree. Students would be eligible for participation after receiving the Certificate of Initial Mastery. These programs would provide industry certification, a strong academic foundation and work experience.

4. Employers should be provided with assistance and incentives to invest in further training of their front line workers, and to reorganize work in a way that makes use of additional skills.

5. The Commission recommends reorganizing employment and training services into a coherent, comprehensive system that is driven by customer needs. By making it easier for all citizens to access the system--without restrictions on eligibility, funding sources, or reporting

requirement-better decisions can be made about what services are needed and how resources should be allocated.

The staff of the Commission has been busy speaking with groups throughout the state, explaining the process of implementation and discussing roles people can play in bringing about reforms. ■

Human Resource Investment Council/Workforce 2000

In 1988, the Workforce 2000 Council was created to improve current and long-term employment opportunities for all Rhode Islanders and develop the competitiveness of Rhode Island employees. A collaborative effort of business, government, education and social services, Workforce 2000 supported training and development programs for businesses that helped them adapt to the labor and technological needs of a competitive national and global economy.

Today, the Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC) works in conjunction with the Department of Employment and Training to continue the mission of Workforce 2000. Supported by a one tenth of one percent allocation of the state's unemployment tax and significant funds raised from local business and industry, HRIC is able to bring to life or lend support to projects which promote job development, competitiveness, and total quality management. Specifically, its four long term goals are:

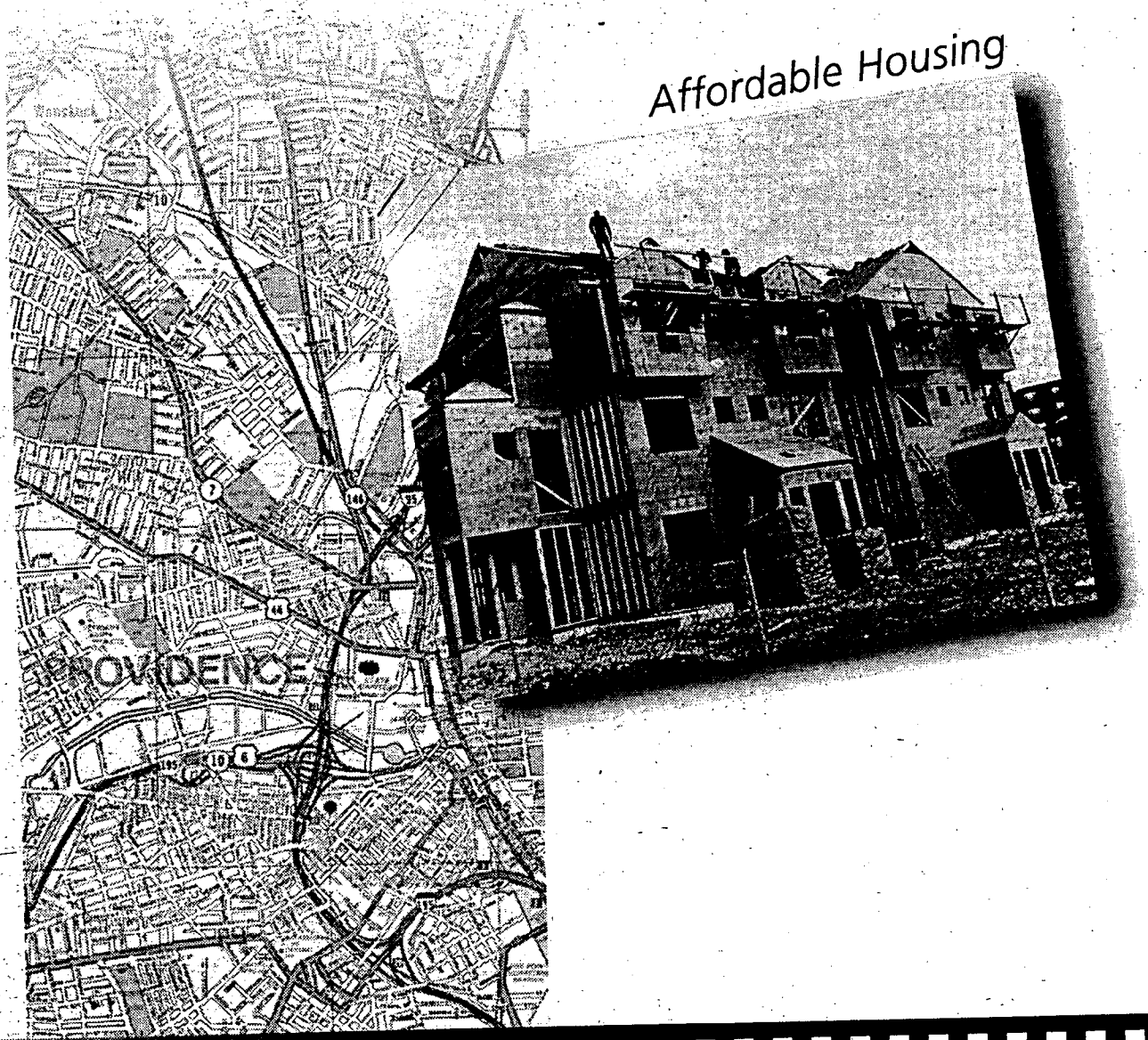
- Forging effective and sustainable linkages between the human resources investment system and the State's economic development needs and activities.
- Building capacity in Rhode Island to support continuous learning among its current and prospective workforce.
- Ensuring responsible program planning and resource utilization.
- Advocating for the needs and interests of those residents most in need of human resource development assistance.

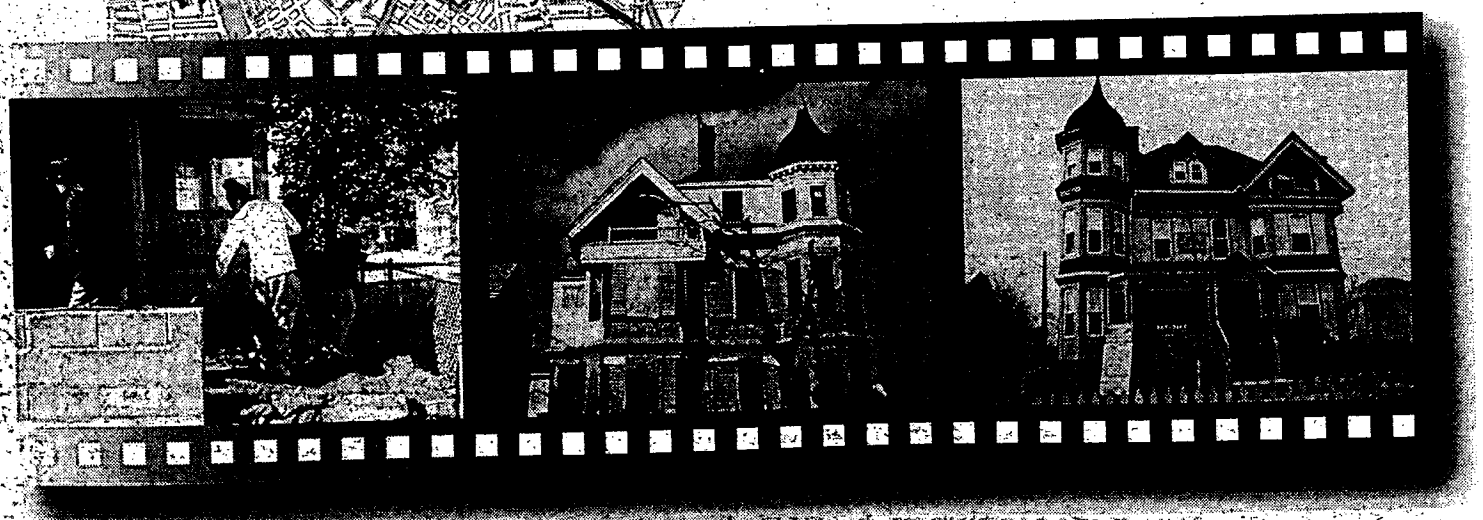
HRIC appropriates funds to organizations through the Workforce 2000 program. In 1993, Workforce 2000 contributed more than $4 million to over 50 programs in the areas of training and upgrading, target populations, labor market information and systems development. ■

Part III

The Strategic Plan

Investing in Places


Affordable Housing
PROVIDENCE



Chapter 10
Affordable Housing

Vision Statement

Affordable housing is a vital element of our comprehensive vision for Providence. Not only is a stable living arrangement a prerequisite for economic independence, but the benefits of quality housing conditions spill beyond the individual homeowner or tenant into the surrounding neighborhood. In order to reflect these different dimensions, the City's housing policy will focus on three key aspects of housing: the physical relationship between housing and the surrounding community; the financial component of making all types of housing affordable; and the commitment to personal choice, so that Providence residents can have more options in terms of housing types and locations.

Physically, the quality of the housing stock represents the defining element in a neighborhood's image. Without sufficient housing investment, a few poorly maintained or abandoned buildings can adversely impact an entire neighborhood. In contrast, targeting limited financial resources on a block by block basis can achieve quick and visible examples of success and prompt reinvestment by the entire neighborhood. Local residents and nonprofits, who have the best understanding of which physical problems to target within a neighborhood, will play a larger, central role in designing and implementing a housing policy that concentrates and coordinates activities so that the benefit of the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Affordability is the second crucial housing issue in Providence. For both renters and owners, increases in housing costs far exceeded income growth during the 1980s, resulting in housing taking up a growing share of personal income. For many families hoping to make the transition from welfare dependency to self-sufficiency, housing costs represent one of the main roadblocks to independence. By providing safe and affordable housing, Providence can ensure that its residents have a secure home environment and are better able to focus on achieving economic independence.

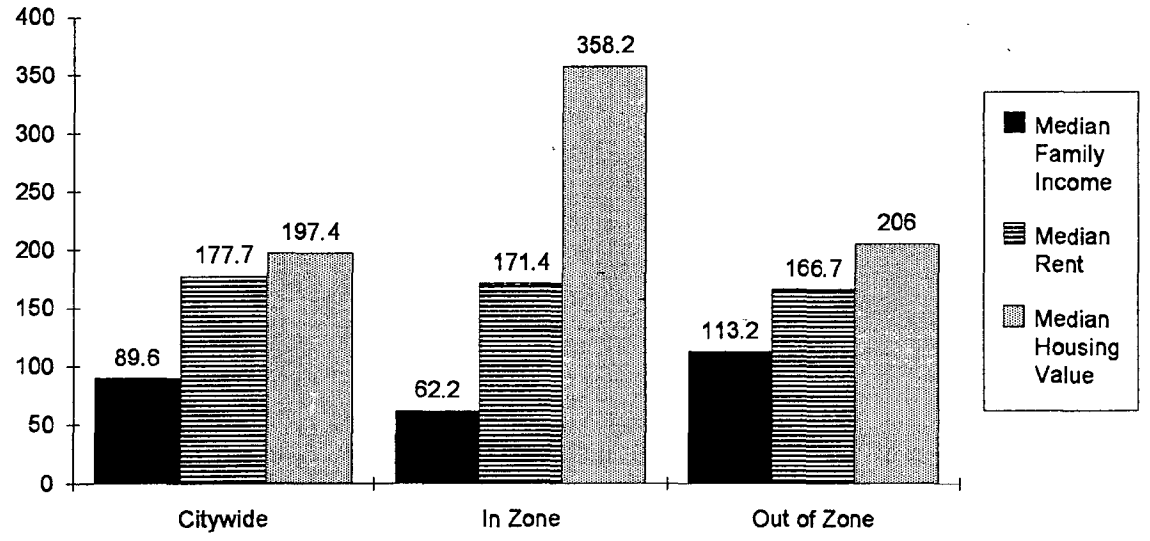
Finally, although Providence is fortunate to have a diverse housing stock, there are numerous financial, informational, and racial barriers that frequently limit the choices available for many residents. Rental, cooperative, and homeownership options should be linked in a "housing continuum" that provides financial and technical support to enable individuals to select the housing type of their choice. Fair housing should also be emphasized to ensure that racial discrimination does not limit the neighborhoods available to minority households.

Context

Providence has recently experienced an unprecedented decline in its housing stock. Rhode Island's banking crisis, the economic recession, and the crash in the New England real estate market have all contributed to the City's current abandoned housing stock of approximately 700 buildings. These buildings are not only unsafe and a drain on the city tax base, but contribute significantly to neighborhood decay.

Housing affordability has also suffered in recent years. As figure 10-1 shows, although median family income rose 89.6 percent between 1980 and 1990, median rent and median housing values increased at approximately double that rate (177.7 % and 197.4 %, respectively). For residents living within the proposed Enterprise Community, the housing affordability gap is even wider, with rents increasing almost six times as fast as income (358.2 % versus 62.2 %).

Figure 10-1
Percent Change in Income and Housing Costs, 1980-1990



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

To address Providence's overall housing needs and in response to the blighting influence of vacant buildings on its neighborhoods, the City created the Providence Plan Housing Corporation (PPHC) in 1992. A citywide public nonprofit organization, the PPHC's mission is "to stimulate the physical revitalization of Providence's neighborhoods, concentrating on recycling vacant and abandoned properties, providing affordable home-purchase and home-repair loans for Providence owner occupants, and working with neighborhoods to initiate and provide technical support for neighborhood improvement programs."

Characteristics of the Housing Stock

Units. The number of housing units in Providence declined by about 750 over the past decade as the total number of units decreased from 67,535 in 1980 to 66,794 in 1990. Overall, the number of housing units has declined by about 10 percent since 1950 when the census reported there were 74,212 housing units in the city. More recently, the number of new units peaked in 1988 (see figure 10-2).

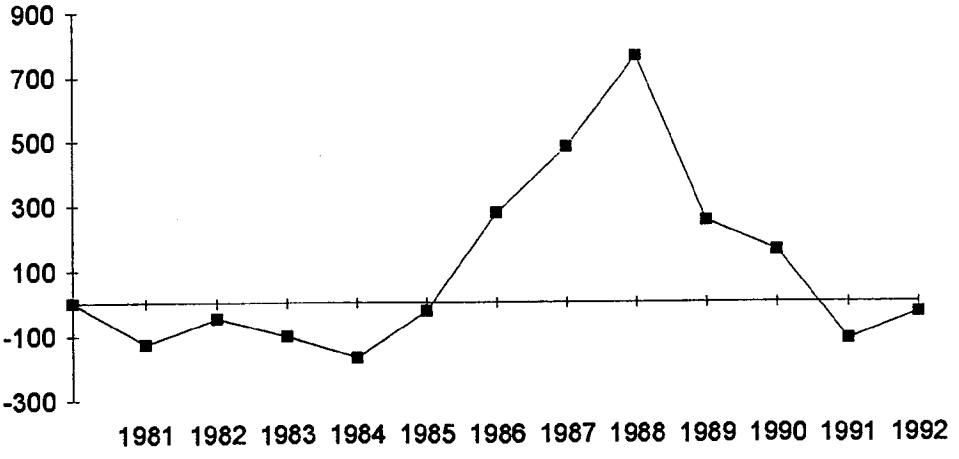
Tenure. The tenure of the city's housing stock has remained fairly constant over the past five decades with about one-third of the city's housing units owner-occupied and two-thirds renter-occupied. The percentage of units that were owner-occupied in 1990 (36.2%) was down slightly from the previous decade (36.9%), although these figures were higher than the rate reported for 1950 (31.7%) (see Map 10-1).

Vacant Units. The number of vacant housing units increased by about 8 percent between 1980 and 1990, and were up sharply from the number of vacant units reported in earlier years. The number of vacant housing units has increased by nearly 60 percent between 1970 and 1990 and has increased nearly seven-fold over the number of vacant units reported in 1950.

Type of Structure. The Providence housing stock is unique in that a large proportion of the city's rental stock is located in two- and three-family structures. More than half of the city's housing units are located in structures that house two to four families. Only one in five housing units is located in a structure with five or more units.

Year Structure Built. According to the 1990 census, two out of three housing units in Providence were built more than 40 years ago, which is about the same proportion recorded in the 1980 census.

Figure 10-2
Net Gain or Loss in Housing Units by Year

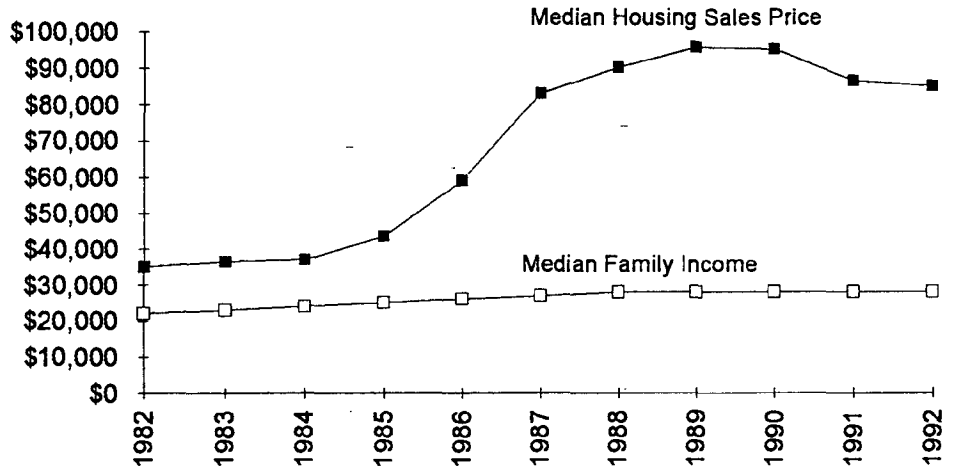


Source: Department of Inspections & Standards

Assisted Housing. About 10,000 housing units in Providence were subsidized in 1993, which is equivalent to about 15 percent of all housing units and 17 percent of all occupied units. The Providence Housing Authority administers 2,386 units of assisted housing in 13 conventional public housing developments and 1,881 units of subsidized housing in the private market assisted through the federal Section 8 and housing voucher programs. In addition, the PHA administers 143 units of assisted housing located in approximately 100 scattered-site developments. More than 5,000 units of subsidized housing in Providence have been assisted through several federal programs dating back to the 1960s. Also included in this category are subsidized units that were funded and administered through the state of Rhode Island, including the federal low income housing tax credit and a state-funded rental assistance program.

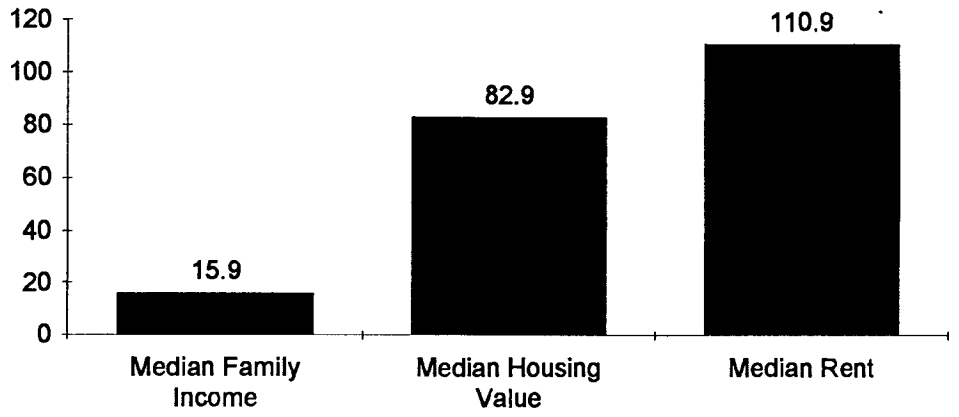
Housing Costs. Median housing value and median rents have risen sharply in Providence over the past decade (see figures 10-3 and 10-4). Between 1980 and 1990 housing costs in Providence nearly tripled as the median value of owner-occupied homes increased from $38,000 in 1980 to $113,000 in 1990, and median rents rose from $139 to $386. By comparison, the median family income in Providence increased 89 percent during this same period.

Figure 10-3
Housing Costs in Relation to Income



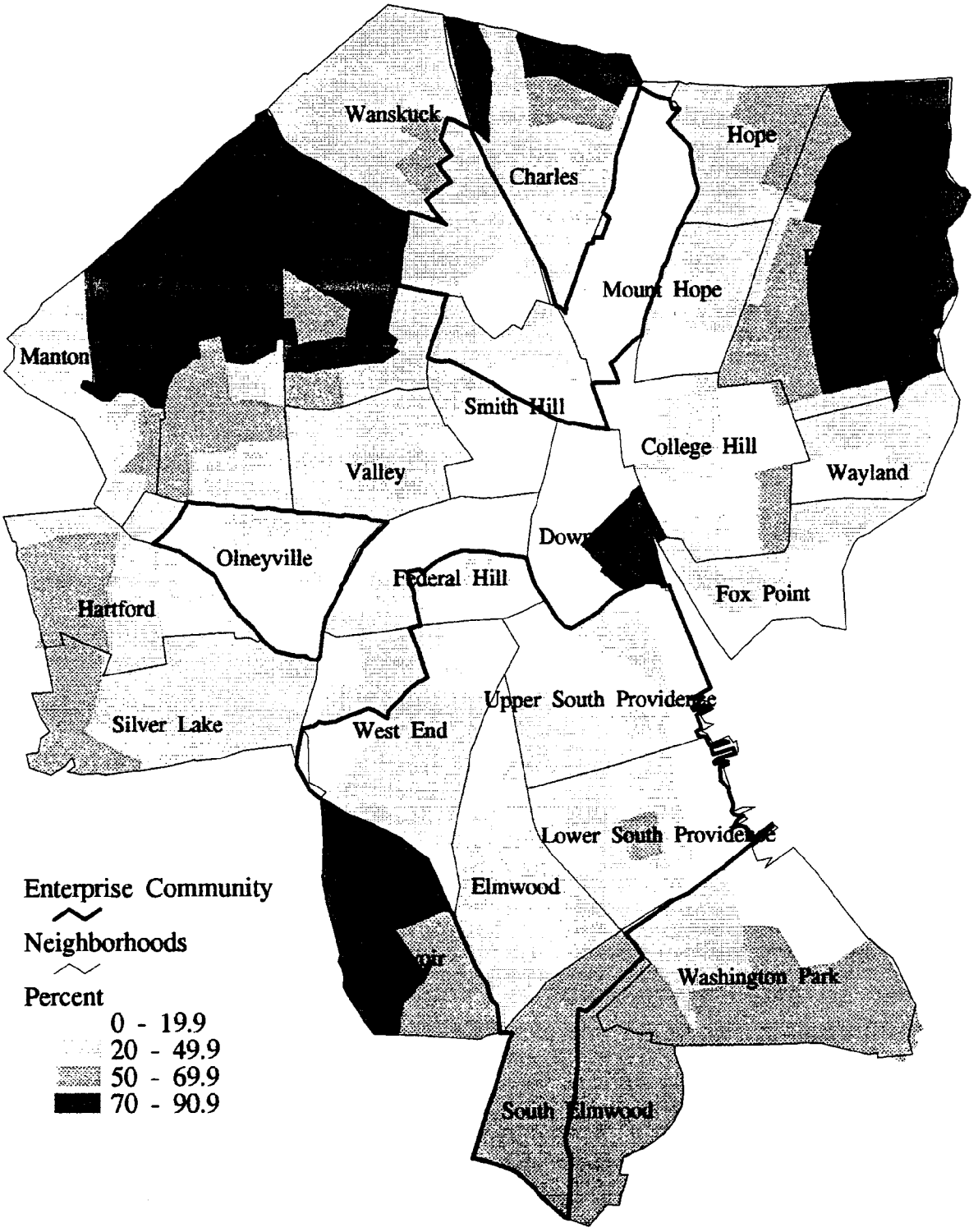
Source: Rhode Island Department of Economic Development

Figure 10-4
Housing Affordability, 1980-1990
Percent Change in Real Dollars



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Map 10-1
Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 1990
Providence Census Block Groups



Voices from the Community

The Affordable Housing Task Force came to a consensus that creating rental and homeownership opportunities should be complementary and not completing options. Instead of fighting over resources, the group felt that it would be more constructive to seek ways for renting and homeownership to reinforce each other, such as through a neighborhood-based approach or through the development of small multifamily houses with one owner-occupant and two renters.

Changing family composition and a growing younger population have resulted in larger household sizes, particularly in those neighborhoods located within the proposed enterprise zone. Many people expressed concern over the difficulty of finding 3-, 44, and 5-bedroom apartments, often resulting in overcrowding, substandard apartment conditions, and high rents.

Energy costs represent a significant expense to low income families, especially given the age of the housing stock in Providence and the lack of sufficient insulation. Development of energy-efficient housing would not only create more comfortable living units, but would also reduce utility bills.

Nonprofit housing providers were frustrated by the fragmentation of resources needed to develop a housing project. Often, a single project can have as many as 7 sources of funds before the units will be affordable to low income Providence residents. This kills many potential developments, and burdens others with bureaucratic paperwork and reporting requirements.

"We need to put some teeth into the Housing Court and Code Violations"

— A Providence resident

"We don't want to be ashamed of where we live, so we say 'near Maple Avenue,' instead of at the project. You have to survive here because there's no place else to go."

— An adolescent

"At the time of my separation, I went to a shelter with the kids. The waiting list for Section 8 was for years, but I was designated homeless so they put me at the top of the list."

— A mother

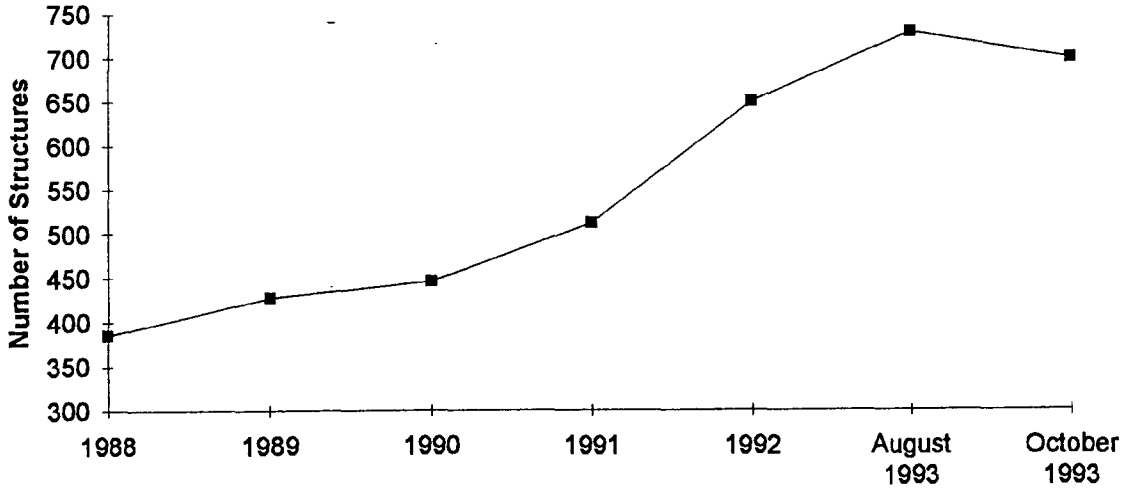
Strategies

In prioritizing the key needs in affordable housing, the task force developed the following three strategies:

1. ***Address the problem of vacant and abandoned properties.*** Providence currently has over 700 vacant or abandoned buildings, a number that has nearly doubled over the past five years (see figure 10-5). This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the seven neighborhoods with the highest concentration of abandoned housing correspond exactly with the seven neighborhoods with the lowest median family income. Although West End, Elmwood, Lower South Providence, Upper South Providence, Olneyville, Federal Hill, and Smith Hill account for only 34 percent of Providence's total population, they include 76 percent of all vacant and abandoned buildings, for an abandoned housing rate six times greater than for the rest of the city (see map 10-2). These seven neighborhoods are also nearly identical to the proposed Enterprise Community boundaries.

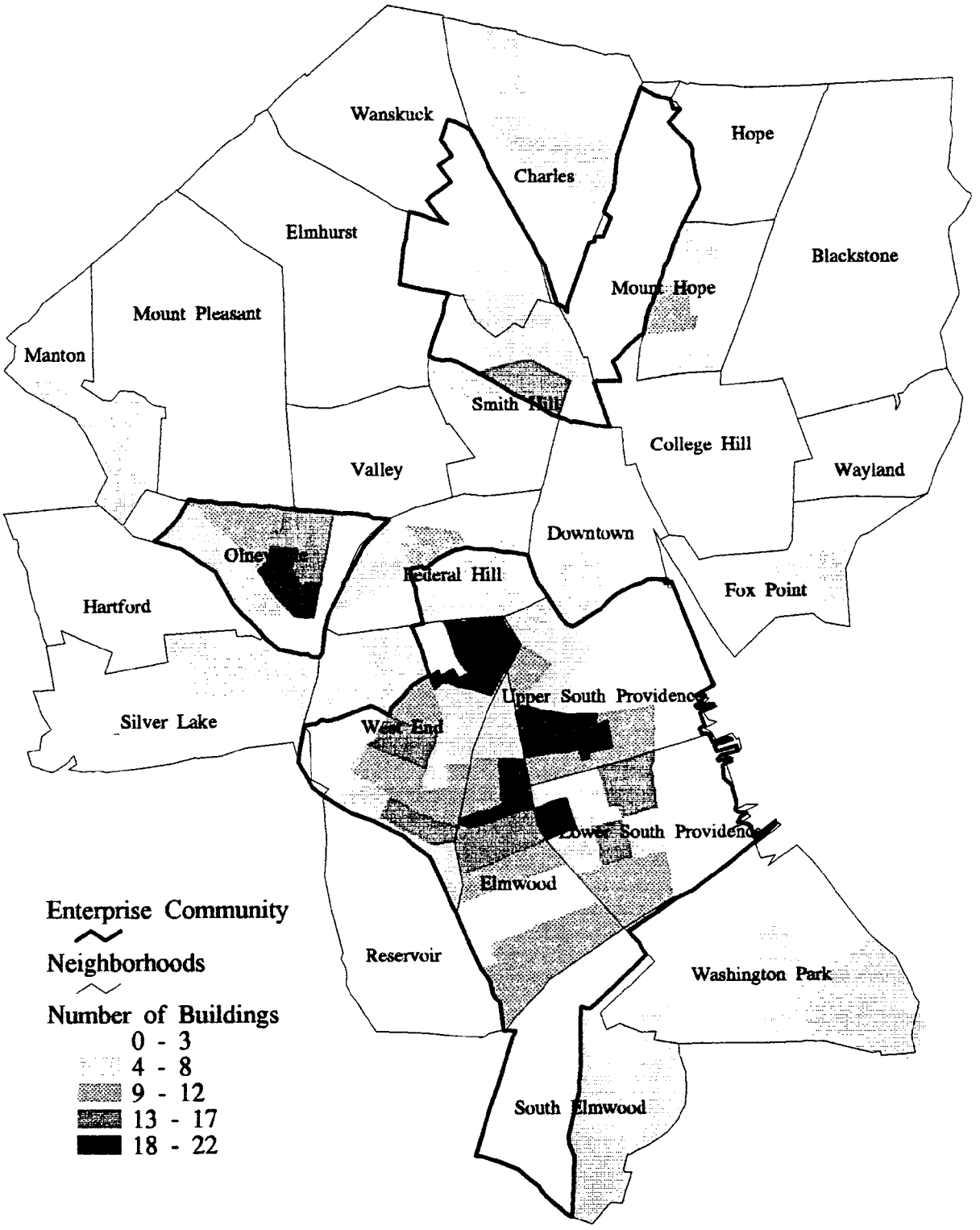
   To deal with this concentration of blight and poverty, the task force recommends aggressively pursuing an abandoned housing strategy that will convert vacant buildings into assets through rehabilitation, or when the buildings are a public safety hazard, demolition. Because most of the abandoned houses are either two or three unit buildings, each house restored will provide an affordable homeownership and one or two affordable rental units, thus promoting more housing choices.

Figure 10-5
Vacant and Abandoned Buildings, 1988-1993



Source: Department of Inspections & Standards

Map 10-2
Vacant and Abandoned Buildings, 1993
Providence Census Block Groups



Next Steps

- The City Tax Assessor's Office, the Recorder of Deeds, and Data Processing departments should revise the City's computer system so that it includes accurate and current title information that would help code enforcement and property acquisition efforts. This information should be made available to the general public for development purposes, to the Department of Planning & Development and PPHC for acquisition, and to the Department of Inspections & Standards for code enforcement.
- The Providence Plan Housing Corporation and the Providence Redevelopment Agency should work together to act as a clearinghouse for the acquisition of distressed properties from banks, tax sales, government agencies, and private property owners. Once acquired, abandoned properties should be given to neighborhood nonprofits for rehabilitation whenever possible. Otherwise, the PPHC should develop the properties itself.
- Implement new and innovative marketing-driven programs. To achieve greater impact and make marketing for resale easier, clusters of abandoned housing should be targeted so that an entire block can be controlled, rehabilitated, and sold within a short time-frame.
- The Housing Court and code enforcement process must be reformed to ensure better compliance with housing code violations. In particular, a better means of tracking properties and stiffer penalties for violators should be instituted.
- The State of Rhode Island should pass legislation changing the tax sale process making it easier for the Providence Redevelopment Agency and PPHC to gain control of tax delinquent property. The effort currently underway in the state legislature will change the system to give the city "first right of refusal" on all parcels up for tax sale.
- The Department of Inspections & Standards should maintain an accurate and up to date database of all vacant and abandoned buildings in Providence. The list should be constantly updated, reflecting newly vacant structures as well as demolition or restorations. This database should also be distributed every month to city agencies and nonprofits.
- The PPHC and other nonprofits should attempt to utilize receivership laws currently in place. On problem properties, a "finding of abandonment" by the courts can allow a petitioner to repair a building and place a lien for services on the building in hopes of forcing responsible property maintenance from negligent property owners.

2. ***Develop a neighborhood-based housing policy.*** Providence's twenty-five neighborhoods are very well defined, and most have an established network of community groups and nonprofits that work on housing issues. In order to achieve meaningful revitalization, Providence must build off of this strength, forge more community-wide partnerships, and coordinate and concentrate investment on a block by block basis.
   Instead of diffusing the impact of housing activities with nonprofits and government agencies scattering their efforts throughout the city, this strategy will concentrate results within tightly defined areas. Abandoned property acquisition, marketing and outreach of existing home repair loan programs, street and sidewalk repairs, and new street lights and trees will all be coordinated on targeted blocks. By limiting the geographic area and committing enough resources, a targeted

approach can convince residents that a community is in the process of revitalization, thereby encouraging investment and leveraging additional private resources.

In selecting the targeted area, developing a detailed plan for the area, and implementing the plan, neighborhood based nonprofit and resident involvement is crucial for creating pride of ownership in the neighborhood. Local citizens are more sensitive to their specific community needs, and can identify the areas of activity that would have the greatest public benefit.

Next Steps

- Local housing nonprofits should expand the number of formal partnerships with each other. This includes marketing agreements, shared staff (such as rehabilitation experts), joint planning, and exchange of information. A coordinated effort, especially in areas where there already exists an overlap of nonprofit areas of influence, will greatly benefit the creation of affordable housing options.
- The Department of Planning & Development should publish a quarterly CDBG newsletter that is more user friendly than the existing yearly grantee performance report. This would facilitate more coordination among the network of nonprofits currently receiving CDBG funding.
- The Providence Plan Housing Corporation should continue its Impact Street program, expanding to new neighborhoods in later years after realizing current goals. The PPHC should work in concert with the various branches of city government and various agencies in making a formal commitment to coordinate infrastructure investments, including streets, sidewalks, trees, street lamps, and housing activities.
- The Providence Plan Housing Corporation should develop a rental rehabilitation program that would provide a matching, zero-interest deferred payment loan to small absentee investors who live in Providence. Without accounting for such investment properties, efforts at neighborhood revitalization cannot be truly comprehensive.
- The Providence Plan should continue to organize in the community to ensure a lasting resident control mechanism in developing and implementing neighborhood plans. Community organizing is one of the best means of engendering psychological investment.
- Affordable housing developments in targeted areas should make space available to Providence community police officers. In return, police officers can play a vital role in responding to resident concerns and expanding the neighborhood-based concept beyond merely physical revitalization.
- City agencies and nonprofits should develop a "Main Street" program to improve the physical appearance of Providence's most visible access corridors. Mixed-use structures provide opportunities for owner occupants who wish to open a business. These buildings should be repaired through both housing and neighborhood economic development funding streams. The infrastructure should be repaired at the same time.
- Housing programs should link with job training and creation by building capacity in minority and small local contractors and creating employment opportunities for residents. The large number of activities being undertaken by both the Providence Plan Housing Corporation and the Providence Housing Authority provide many opportunities for Providence residents.

3. ***Provide a continuum of housing choices.*** Although Providence offers a wide array of housing types - including single families, duplexes, triple-deckers, and apartment buildings - many residents have restricted housing options due to insufficient income, poor credit, racial discrimination, or lack of knowledge about what is available. The foundation of our housing strategy is to overcome these barriers and offer as many housing options to Providence residents as possible.

   The key element of this strategy is recognition of the fact that renting and homeownership are not competing options. Development of two, three, or four unit houses can create both rental and homeownership opportunities. Homeowners who receive interest subsidies to buy multifamily properties can also be required to charge affordable rents, not only making it easier for new landlords to keep vacancies down, but also in effect creating a project-based rental subsidy. Better education and communication between landlords and tenants can also help make homeownership and renting mutually reinforcing.

   In order to form a link between renting and homeownership, cooperative housing should be pursued as a housing alternative. Many renters want to buy a house, but are unable to make the leap, either because of financial constraints, or because they do not have an understanding of what it entails to become a homeowner. Cooperatives can overcome both of these barriers through extensive counseling and education, and a built-in savings mechanism through the recapture of amortized principle.

   Finally, the housing continuum concept should be expanded to include choices for the homeless and other "at-risk" populations. Prevention, emergency responses, and transitional housing are all links leading up to a permanent housing solution, and we cannot address any one element without thinking about the problem holistically.

Next Steps

- The City of Providence is requesting that the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development allocate an additional 150 project-based Section 8 certificates to expand housing opportunities for Providence residents. As explained more fully in chapter 18, these certificates would be earmarked for rental units created as part of the Providence Plan Housing Corporation's Abandoned Housing Program.
- Government and nonprofit housing providers should develop a comprehensive housing education curriculum that would encompass how to be a good renter or landlord, as well as detailing the steps necessary to access existing programs and lending sources.
- To complement the education component, the government/nonprofit partners should create a master database to keep track of certified apartments and apartment seekers so that graduates of the program can quickly find a nice apartment or responsible tenant.
- The Providence Plan Housing Corporation and other low income housing developers should limit the rents charged by first time homeowners benefiting from their programs to create new affordable rental units.
- The Providence Plan Housing Corporation should expand its Cooperative housing program, as well as provide technical and financial assistance for local nonprofits that are also interested in developing cooperatives. The PPHC should seek additional funding to underwrite these costs.

Assets and Opportunities

Although the task force recognized a need for more resources devoted to affordable housing, Providence has already mobilized a substantial amount of investment:

The Providence Plan Housing Corporation (PPHC). PPHC's funding represents a unique model for leveraging resources and forming partnerships across different levels of government. Initially funded by a $9 million HUD Section 108 loan, the PPHC will pay back that loan and recapitalize its programs through a $26 million tax incremental financing bond issue backed by the Narragansett Electric expansion of their Manchester Street facility. Other sources of funds tapped by the PPHC include $311,000 from Providence's 1992 CDBG allocation, $3.5 million in federal HOME funds, and $798,000 from a HUD HOPE 3 implementation grant. In addition, the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) expects to provide approximately $77 million in financing through the PPHC. Major programs include:

- "Paint the Town" Program. Up to $3,000 is available to Providence owner occupants to paint the exterior of their home. No repayment is required if the homeowner lives in the home for at least three years following painting. To date, funds totaling $2.2 million have been committed to more than 1,100 homes.
- Home Repair Programs. The PPHC packages its own Home Repair funds, RIHMFC Home Repair funds, or a combination of the two to provide low interest loans to households with a combined maximum income of $46,690. To date, over $2.7 million has been committed to 220 homeowners.
- Home Purchase Programs. In conjunction with RIHMFC and the FHA, the PPHC provides down payment, closing cost, and second mortgage assistance and homebuyer education to first time homeowners. To date, over $700,000 has been committed to 94 homeowners.
- Abandoned Housing Program. The PPHC recently received a $798,000 HOPE 3 implementation grant from HUD that will restore 40 abandoned properties while creating affordable homeownership and rental opportunities. In addition, the PPHC is budgeting $3 million to acquire, renovate, or demolish an additional 355 abandoned houses to reduce the city's stock by 50 percent.
- Nehemiah. OMNI Housing Development Corporation, the Providence Redevelopment Authority, and PPHC are working together to acquire lots for the development of Nehemiah homes. OMNI is the recipient of federal Nehemiah funds to develop and sell Nehemiah-funded homes with a silent second mortgage of $15,000 payable upon sale, transfer, or lease. Home prices will range from $75,000 to $80,000 before the Nehemiah loan is made. Twenty-one units are currently being sold in Federal Hill, with another 27 being developed in South Providence. Both sites are located within Providence's proposed Enterprise Community.
- Impact Streets. Recognizing the need to target investment, the PPHC has worked with nonprofit partners to select several streets on which to target activity. Abandoned housing acquisition and disposition, street and sidewalk repairs, and new street lights and trees are all incorporated into the Impact Street plans.
- Sidewalk Program. The PPHC has committed $1.2 million to repair approximately 1,000 throughout Providence. As much as possible, this effort is being coordinated with the impact street program.

Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC). Rhode Island's state housing finance agency provides financial and program support to create affordable housing for low and moderate income Rhode Islanders. As the state's principal housing agency, the Corporation offers more than 20 programs in the areas of homeownership and rental housing. Generally, there are purchase price and eligibility restrictions. A self-supporting entity that receives no state tax dollars, RIHMFC primarily funds its programs through the sale of tax-exempt bonds on the capital markets. Since 1973, the Corporation has financed more then 41,000 houses and 13,000 apartments statewide. Major programs include:

- Rental Housing Production Program. Rhode Island Housing's primary program for financing the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing, rental production provides first mortgages for the development of multifamily housing. This program is often packaged with the Targeted Loan Program, which provides second mortgages based on the number of affordable rental units produced, and federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits, which help developers raise equity through the sale of tax credits to corporate investors. Between 1973 and 1990, RIHMFC has invested over $200 million in Providence to create rental units for 3366 households.
- Rental Subsidy Program. RIHMFC has recently committed $12 million from its reserves to fund 664 project based rental subsidies over the next three years.
- 1st Time Homebuyer Mortgages. RIHMFC provides low-interest mortgages to help low and moderate income Rhode Islanders buy their first homes. During 1993, RIHMFC made 274 loans in Providence totaling over $21 million. Within the proposed Enterprise Community, RIHMFC made 53 loans totaling almost $4 million dollars. The average income level of families receiving 1st mortgages from RIHMFC is approximately $26,000.
- Buy it/Fix it. This program provides a single, low-interest mortgage to cover the cost of buying or refinancing an older home and making substantial repairs. Borrowers may update kitchens and baths, correct code violations, improve energy efficiency, make a home accessible to persons with functional disabilities, or remove hazardous substances such as asbestos or lead.
- Home Repair Loans. RIHMFC will make low interest loans of up to $15,000 for needed repairs (as allowed under Buy it/Fix it above) to owner-occupied one to four family houses.
- RIHMFC is providing approximately $231,000 in 2nd mortgages that will serve as a cash match for the Providence Plan Housing Corporation's HOPE 3 grant. These funds are underwriting the cost of placing 1st time homebuyers with an income of less than $26,000 in rehabilitated abandoned housing.

The Providence Housing Authority. The PHA owns and operates 2,508 units of conventional public housing in thirteen developments and is contract administrator for 2,344 units of Section 8 certificates (1,035), vouchers (600), moderate rehabilitation (329), and 11-B (380). One hundred thirty-seven of the PHA's public housing units are so-called "scattered-sites" because they are located throughout the city in clusters of less than 12 units on any one site. These units are either single family or duplex style.

The PHA has authorized funds to construct an additional 103 units of scattered-site housing. They are being awarded to "turnkey" developers in quantities of 4, 6, and 10 unit packages. The PHA also has 32 units of additional public housing under construction at the Hartford Park housing development. These units will be ready for occupancy in October 1994. When the scattered-site program and the units at Hartford Park are completed, the PHA will have an inventory of 2,642 units in 6 family developments and 7 elderly/disabled developments.

The PHA also runs numerous social service programs for its residents in both family and elderly/disabled developments.

The Providence Department of Planning and Development (DPD). The planning department is responsible for administering the CDBG program. They also coordinate a paint program with the PPHC, and run a vacant lot program through the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA).

Local Nonprofits. There are several CDCs and housing nonprofits working in Providence to develop affordable housing. These groups often work in coordination with the city, the PPHC, LISC, banks, RIHMFC, and other funding sources to leverage enough resources to complete housing projects.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). Since 1991, Rhode Island LISC has served as an intermediary providing both financial and technical support to community development corporations in Rhode Island. LISC financing (equity, loan, seed money, grants) support housing projects as well as economic development activities which are geared toward revitalizing neighborhoods. LISC's subsidiary, the National Equity Fund, provides tax credits to nonprofit developers developing tax credit projects. LISC's National Equity Fund has invested more than $1.8 million of equity in Providence rental housing projects and anticipates investing another $1.2 million in projects in 1994.

Fair Housing Task Force. The Providence Department of Planning and Development has recently organized a Fair Housing Task Force to examine issues of housing discrimination. This effort represents the first time that housing advocates, citizens, and housing agencies have met as a group to address fair housing concerns. The group meets bimonthly, and is currently working on writing an overall report on fair housing, conducting a survey of housing providers and financial institutions, developing a testing program, and promoting public education and outreach.

Advent House Corporation Advent House provides lodging, meals and support services for up to 56 people. Since its opening in 1980 as Rhode Island's first emergency shelter for the homeless, it has served over 1500 people. The House plans to expand to another building this fall offer not only emergency shelter, but also transitional living facilities.

The Providence Plan Housing Corporation

The Providence Plan Housing Corporation is a little over a year old, but in that time it has done substantial work in stimulating the physical revitalization of Providence neighborhoods. Over 2,000 properties have been affected by its home-purchasing, home-repair, or abandoned housing programs (see map 10-3).

PPHC's Homebuyers Assistance Program has proven to be one of its main successes. So far, approximately 100 first time homebuyers have closed on a purchase assisted by PPHC, 100 homebuyers have signed a purchase and sales agreement anticipating PPHC assistance, and 200 people have attended PPHC's Homebuyers Education program (STEP UP).

Homebuyers Assistance is currently financed with an agreement between the borrowers, PPHC, Rhode Island Housing, and the FHA for insurance. The borrower can purchase a house

for as little as $1,000 down, and the PPHC provides the additional down payment, closing costs, and second mortgage assistance. The $567,000 expended by the PPHC on 90 home sales has leveraged an additional $6.2 million on the FHA-backed portion of the program, with another 90 purchases expected to close by the end of September.

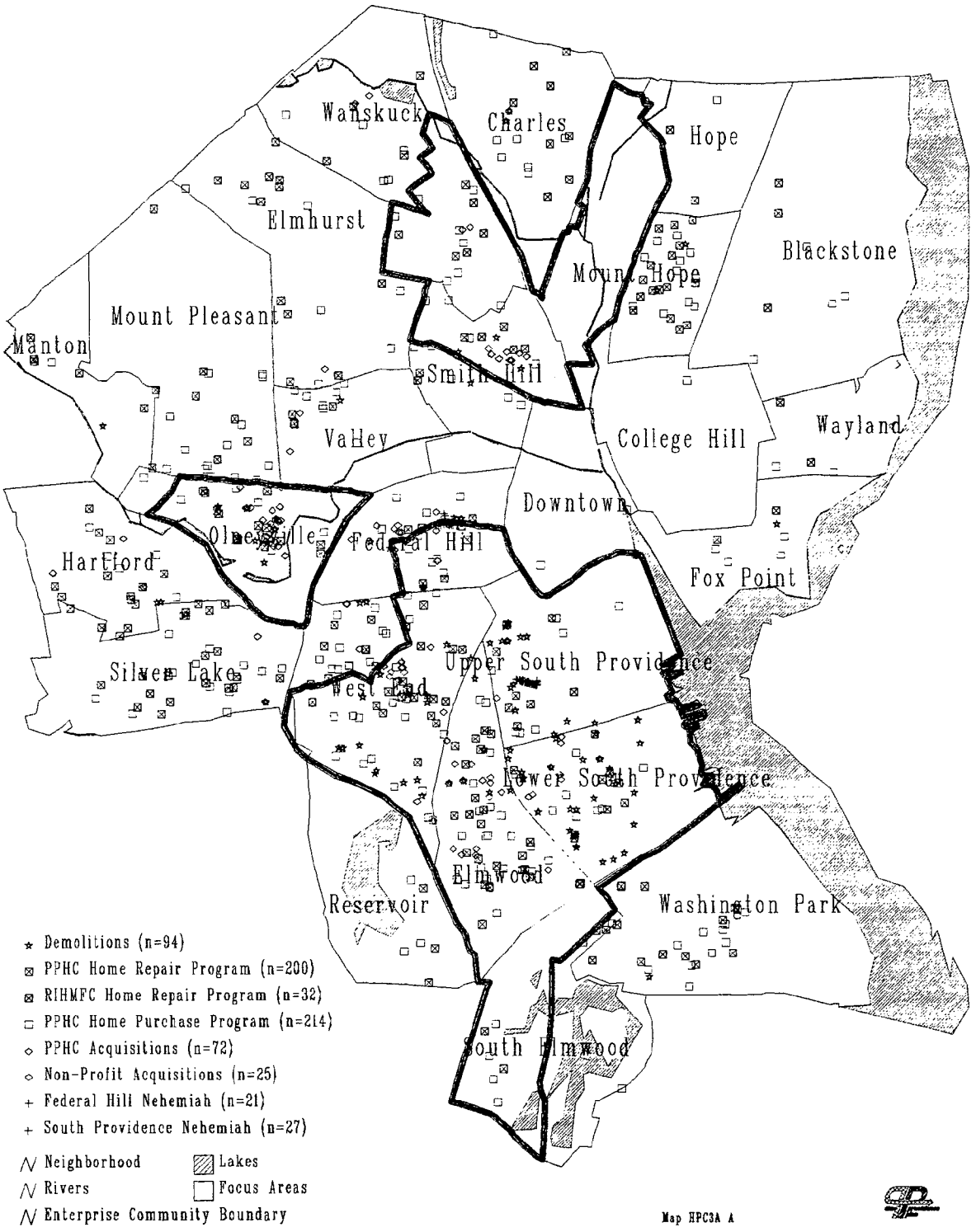
The PPHC is also working with private lenders on a new program called Banklincs. In this financing scheme, the banks and a private mortgage insurer (PMI) enter a risk share agreement in which the PMI agrees to finance up to 83% of a mortgage default. This program should help finance 350 homes in a 3 year period of time.

Another Homebuyers Program success is its client diversity. Of the 145 clients helped to date, approximately 25% have been white, 24% Black, 49% Hispanic and 2% Asian. These figures are even more impressive when placed in the context of relatively low minority homeownership rates throughout the city.

Beyond home purchases, property beautification programs such as the Paint the Town, Sidewalk Repair, and Home Repair have assisted over 1,000 properties. The Home Repair Program is particularly noteworthy, with 220 homeowners assisted with an average income of only $18,736. There, the participant pool is 29% black, 19% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 1% American Indian.

PPHC is looking to expand the scope and depth of their programs in the upcoming year. Its goals are to double both the number of homeowners assisted through homebuyers and home improvement loans, reduce the abandoned housing problem by 50%, and concentrate efforts on strategic areas to visibly and substantially increase their impact. PPHC expects to have assisted over 3,500 properties between 1993 and 1995. ■

Map 10-3
Providence Plan Housing Corporation Activities, 1993



Improving the Quality of the Public Housing Stock

In 1989, the Providence Housing Authority (PHA) was the first large public housing authority in the nation to be removed from HUD's list of "troubled" authorities following an extensive reorganization and the implementation of a management improvement and performance monitoring system.

Since then, the PHA has gone on to win numerous awards, from both the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. One indicator of this success has been an annual occupancy rate exceeding 98 percent for the last three years.

The PHA has also received $64.5 million in Comprehensive Improvement Assistance Program (CIAP) funds since 1987. An additional $4.2 will be allocated to the PHA for modernization purposes on July 1.

Comprehensive renovations have occurred at 1,082 units, or 43 percent of the PHA inventory. After Fiscal Year 1995, the PHA will have completed comprehensive modernization at all of its family developments and remedied major systems problems at most of the elderly/disabled high-rises.

Changes have also been made in the management of maintenance and security at the facilities. Maintenance was improved by hiring more skilled craftsmen, purchasing more efficient equipment, and creating a computerized work-order system. Security has been improved by the addition of a permanent unit of regular, full-time Providence Police patrolmen, resident crime watches, and night security at elderly/disabled high rises.

Yet, the Providence Housing Authority has more than just housing developments as its concern; it is also concerned with the families' and individuals' development within these structures, and has created a variety of programs to serve these residents.

Each of the housing sites for families has a multipurpose community center that has facilities and programs for youths and adults. Youth programs include an after school program that offers tutorials, health education and enrichment classes, and a summer day camp that offers both recreational and educational activities. Substance abuse prevention has also been integrated into many programs at the family centers. Both the summer and after school programs, as well as the sports and recreation activities have mandatory drug education workshops.

For adults there are also a variety of educational programs. Currently PHA is providing funding and transportation for 26 residents working towards their GEDs at Dorcas Place, an adult

education center. There are also on-site educational opportunities such as ESL classes, computer classes, and parent/child literacy programs. For adult enrichment, they offer aerobics and nutrition classes.

Another program that is required for residents of PHA developments is the Preparation for Community Living Program (PCL). Before residents move-in, they are given orientation workshops that discuss the duties and responsibilities of tenancy and an overview of the programs and facilities within the housing development.

The elderly/disabled developments have programs that work to counteract concerns about health care, security, and isolation. Aging 2000, a state health consortium, has chosen one of the developments as a pilot project site. Additionally, in conjunction with other agencies, they provide transportation to doctor appointments, on-site health advice, and noon meals. ■

Neighborhood-Based Nonprofit Agencies

Providence is fortunate to have a multitude of housing providers. In fact, the capacity among these groups is such that nearly every subpopulation can be served by the numerous entities already in place. There are a number of Community Development Corporations, facilities for the various special needs populations, historic preservation advocates, citywide cooperative housing providers, community land trusts, shelters for the homeless, all of which attempt to meet the needs of Providence residents.

Many of the entities located in Providence are members of the Rhode Island Housing Network, a loose collaborative effort to coordinate the nonprofit housing developers. These various nonprofits are used by the Providence Department of Planning and Development and the Providence Plan Housing Corporation to carry out housing programs. They act as a liaison between government and community through an assortment of grants including the Providence entitlement from the CDBG.

During fiscal year 1993, the City of Providence spent $1,106,889 out of $6,139,000 of the CDBG grant in housing related activity. These expenditures include $450,000 used for administration in the housing division of the Department of Planning & Development. The remaining funds, $656,889, were provided directly to thirteen of the neighborhood-based housing providers mentioned above.

Nearly $142,000 was used to fund OMNI Development Corporation, a statewide nonprofit charged with developing two areas of "Nehemiah" houses. The remaining 12 entities are engaged in the rehabilitation of 127 housing units to be made available to low and moderate income families.

But perhaps the most significant aspect of the many nonprofit housing providers are their locations within the city. Geographically, the neighborhood-based nonprofit housing provider's areas of operation cover much of the city. Providence has 25 ethnically and culturally diverse neighborhoods, all of which are served by at least one housing provider and in many cases, three or four agencies serve one neighborhood. Within the suggested census tracts, there are a number of nonprofit agencies which provide residents with affordable housing opportunities.

CDBG Funded Housing Nonprofit Corporations

Stop Wasting Abandoned Property; Good News Housing / Community Land Trust; Providence Preservation Society Revolving Fund; Elmwood Foundation; Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services; West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation; Smith Hill Development Corporation; Olneyville Housing Corporation; OMNI Development; Housing Development Corporation of the North End; Mount Hope Community Land Trust; Women's Development Corporation; West Broadway Incentive Corporation. ■

Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) was created in 1973 as a public corporation to provide financial and program support to assist in the development and preservation of affordable housing for low and moderate income Rhode Islanders. The Corporation has successfully demonstrated its administrative and financial capabilities by providing affordable multi-family housing for over 15,000 residents in the state. RIHMFC dispenses $6 million per month in operating subsidies for a total of $72 million annually. In 1991, RIHMFC was designated as Rhode Island's "Principal Housing Agency," bringing new responsibility for managing the State Rental Subsidy Program and the Section 8 Existing Program, which have assisted over 1,500 families. RIHMFC is nationally recognized as a State Housing Finance Agency leader, and has received a Standard and Poor's "Top Tier" status, indicating their highest bond rating.

Proposed Rental Developments within the Enterprise Community

Over the next several years, RIHMFC is preparing to contribute $22.6 million to three projects located within Providence's proposed Enterprise Community Boundaries. This proposed investment will be used to construct 136 units at Mandela Woods, 24 units at the West End Preservation II, and 12 units at the Indian Village Development.

The largest of these developments is the Mandela Woods Housing development, which will be located at the 19.5 acre site in South Providence which now holds what little remains of the mostly demolished 744-unit Roger Williams Homes, a public housing project of the 1940s. Mandela Woods represents a particularly innovative housing investment, combining community involvement, diverse funding sources, and community control. In 1988, the Roger Williams Partnership, a nonprofit community housing team of determined residents, activists, and consulting assistants, was selected by the city for its plan for the use of one of the largest undeveloped sites in Providence.

The proposed development is not a typical government housing project; it is instead community-based. The South Providence community has decided that Mandela Woods' low and middle-income residents will live in carpeted townhouses with private entrances, air conditioning, yards, and parking spaces, and be near a new community center and five-acre park. Not only will the residents be provided with these basic comforts, but they will constitute 51 percent of the Mandela Woods' management association, a factor which developers predict will provide them with a sense of responsibility and ownership. This new housing development will also help revitalize its surrounding residential neighborhood--replacing an overgrown vacant lot with new housing will improve the neighborhood and attract much needed businesses to the area. The $19.6 million proposal, currently awaiting $11 million in tax syndication proceeds, will be financed by federal, state, and local governments with HOME, Section 108, Section 8 funds, and Providence Redevelopment Authority bonds. ■

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

In 1989, The Rhode Island Housing Partnership, made up of local business, community and government leaders, started working with the national office of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to establish a Rhode Island office. In August of 1991, Rhode Island LISC began providing financial and technical assistance to community development corporations (CDCs). Local supporters have contributed $2.1 million to LISC's initial pool of funds. In addition, National LISC and its subsidiary, National Equity Fund (NEF), have brought over $2.8 million in matching funds and project equity to Rhode Island.

Rhode Island LISC provides a multi-faceted program of financial and technical assistance. Since its start-up, LISC has invested more than $3.6 million in CDC projects. When successfully completed, the projects will produce more than 365 new or rehabilitated units of affordable rental and homeownership housing in neighborhoods throughout the State. In addition, LISC has

supported several economic development projects and a number of technical training seminars for CDCs.

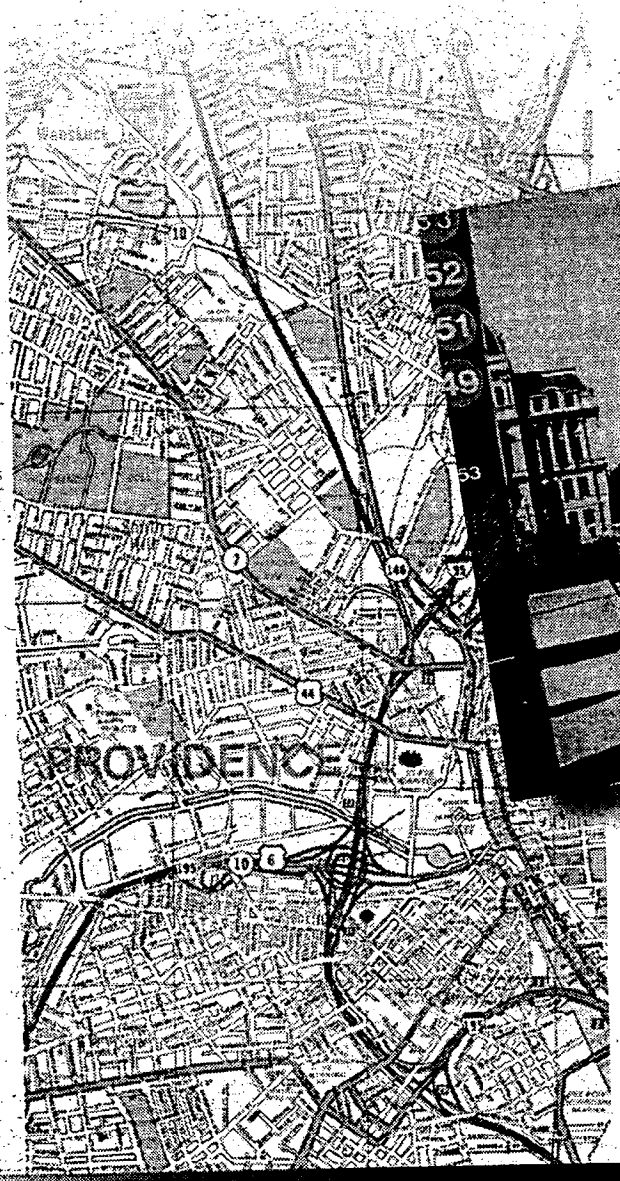
In 1993, Rhode Island LISC, in cooperation with the Rhode Island Foundation, the United Way, the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) and the Prince Charitable Trust, launched a new program, the Neighborhood Development Fund. The NDF is a multi-year operating support and management assistance program designed to help five CDCs increase their housing production and build more effective organizations. To date, LISC has raised $700,000 for the NDF.

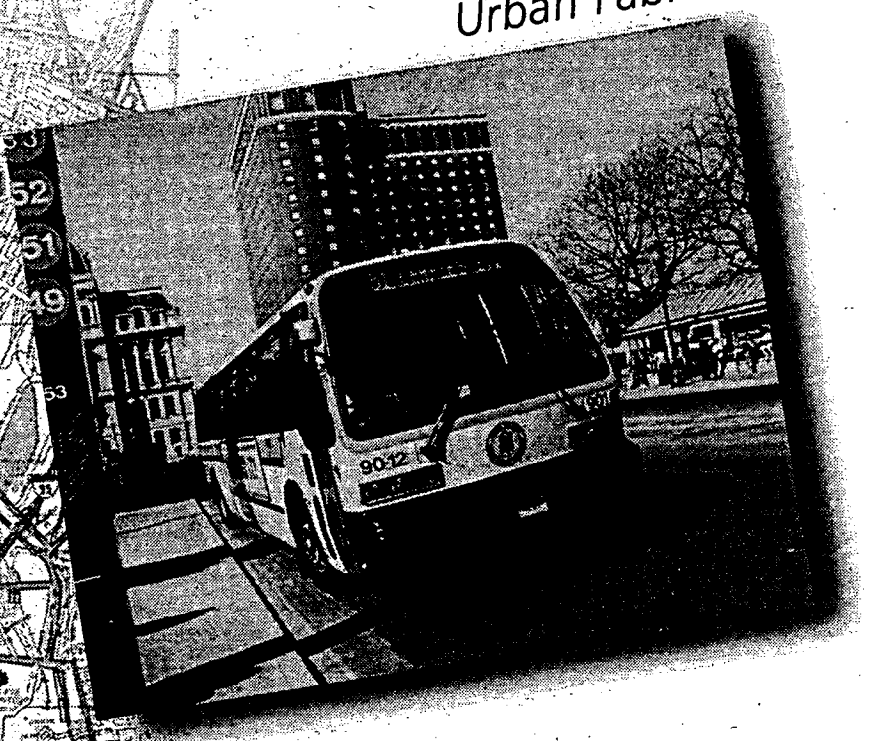
Since 1991, Rhode Island LISC has worked to increase the visibility of CDCs and promote their recognition as agents of change in Rhode Island's neighborhoods. To this end, LISC funds are being used to enhance the capacity of CDCs to revitalize their communities into safer and healthier neighborhoods for low and moderate income Rhode Islanders.

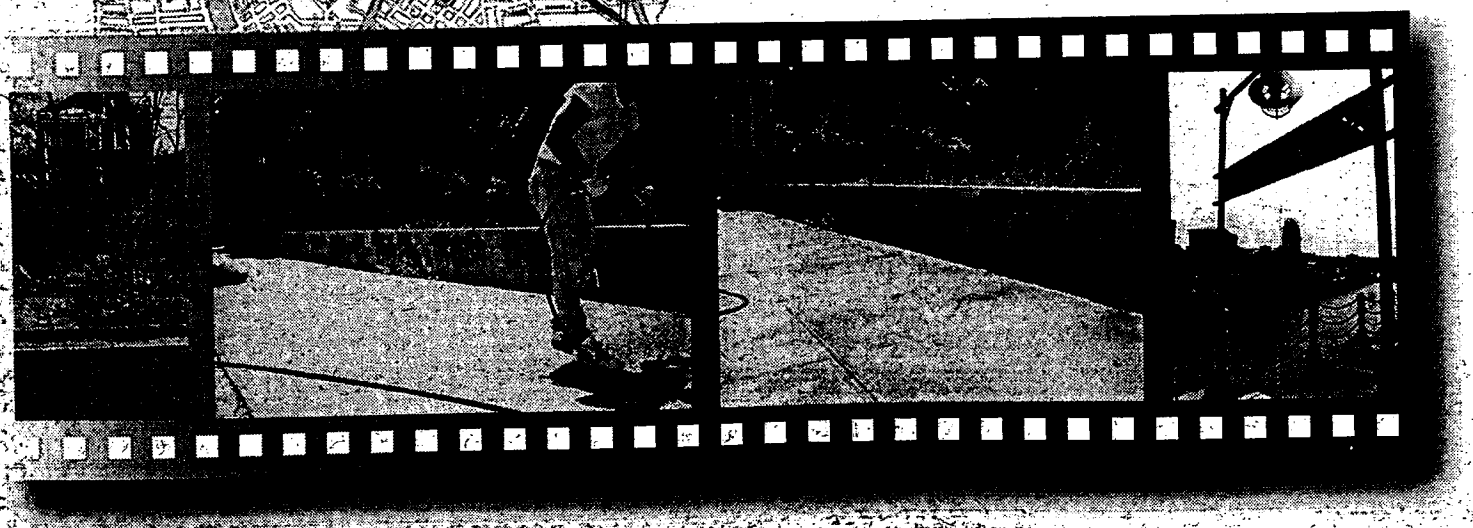
Of the five Rhode Island CDCs to be funded under this new program, two are located in Providence. Both agencies operate within the borders of the proposed Enterprise Community. They are the West Elmwood Housing Development Corporation (WEHDC) and Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (SWAP). WEHDC has concentrated its rehabilitation and home purchasing activities in one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse areas of the city. SWAP has begun a vacant housing rehabilitation program in a similar neighborhood which focuses on a small core, Gallup and Colfax streets, and hopes to spur reinvestment in the surrounding area.

Another entity being assisted is the Newport, Rhode Island based Church Community Housing Corporation which has recently initiated a program to provide single family homeownership opportunities in the South Elmwood neighborhood of Providence, also within the zone. ■

Urban Fabric







Chapter 11
Urban Fabric

Vision Statement

Providence's natural beauty and built environment benefit all residents. Land use planning emphasizes affordable housing opportunities which accentuate local historic character in all neighborhoods. Existing open space is enhanced and preserved. Yards, green space and waterfront development sensitive to the existing and future fabric are encouraged. Providence is a city where vacant lots and abandoned residential and commercial buildings do not contaminate the remainder of the neighborhood. Speculative investment has slowed dramatically and both renters and owners feel responsible for the welfare of their neighborhoods. Providence residents have a real stake in the shaping of land use patterns in their neighborhoods.

Residential land use is balanced with commercial and institutional land use. Good city planning ensures that small businesses and services are located conveniently, zoned appropriately and provide the amenities necessary for both basic and vibrant urban living. Public transportation supports urban living with circular and "cross-town" bus routes which encourage intra-city mass transit use. Streets are no longer abandoned for institutional or business use. Hospitals and Institutions for Higher Education no longer expand at the expense of the Providence community and are redirected towards more appropriate locations. Vacant and abandoned buildings and lots are no longer concentrated in the inner city but have been recycled into uses which benefit local residents.

Community and neighborhood residents have a strong voice in determining the use of local land. Residents have the best sense of how local buildings and spaces can most effectively address community needs, strong community input leads to appropriate land use. Re-orienting decision making power to neighborhoods will encourage civic pride and individual connectedness to one's neighborhood. Ownership, in both the literal and the psychological sense, will promote environmental responsibility and self-policing. Citywide leadership will be conducive to public discussion and will also be serious about acting on community input.

The Context

Providence developed in a unique way compared to most older industrial cities. Its settlers, refugees from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, seemed to have no need for a common square or meeting house, and the town grew in a linear fashion, along the banks of the Providence River. The downtown area, typically the core of early development in a community, remained undeveloped for more than a century after Providence's colonization in 1636. Known then as Weybosset Neck, the downtown area to the west of the river was dominated by steep hills, marshy lowlands, and muddy creeks. Not until 1771 was any kind of permanent link created between downtown and the East Side of the city.

A demand for a specialized commercial district in Providence increased around the turn of the nineteenth century, as the downtown started to develop west of the Providence River. Shipping and manufacturing became the key industries around the downtown area, as residential development continued along the fringes of the downtown district. By the end of the 1820s, today's downtown was a thriving area, thereby spurring residential and commercial development to the south and west. The City of Providence continued to grow, becoming a prominent city in New England, reaching its peak population in the 1940s at more than 250,000.

Environment and Natural Resources. Providence is characterized by a number of outstanding features. Providence enjoys a key location at the head of Narragansett Bay, which enabled the city to become both a water powered manufacturing center and a water borne trade center in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Seekonk River, which flows into the Providence River and then into Narragansett Bay, forms the eastern boundary of the city. The Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers flow south through the city and form the Providence River at their confluence. Other water resources include the West River, Canada Pond, Mashapaug Pond, and several ponds located in Roger Williams Park. With the exception of the Port of Providence, which is New England's second largest deep water port, Providence's water resources are primarily used for recreational purposes today.

Despite its abundance of water resources, Providence faces significant water quality problems, due largely to combined sewer overflows which discharge into the Moshassuck, West, Seekonk, Woonasquatucket and Providence Rivers and eventually into Narragansett Bay. The cumulative effect of these overflow discharges over the last eight decades have resulted in the permanent closing of 5,600 acres of shellfish beds due to bacterial contamination. An additional 10,000 acres of shellfish beds are closed for seven days following major rainstorms. The Narragansett Bay Commission has launched an ambitious Combined Sewer Overflow capital improvement project to address these problems and to improve the general aesthetic quality of the city's waterways. The results of only the preliminary work in this area are slowly emerging, fish have been seen once again in the rivers of the city.

Providence Air Quality. Air quality is an important factor in the quality of life for Providence residents and can be used as a means of guiding transportation and economic development policy. In Providence, as in all urbanized areas, the primary source of air contaminants is motor vehicle emissions. Concentrated activity in the summer months while the air is more humid threatens the quality of life for city residents. Throughout the year, the number, type and speed of motor vehicles, the type of roads and the number of idling vehicles, have direct ramifications on air quality. Downtown Providence is impacted severely due to the slow speed of vehicles and the number of parking lots. The problem created downtown also spreads to other parts of the city.

Providence is part of the Metropolitan Interstate Air Quality Control Region #120 which includes southeastern Massachusetts and all of Rhode Island. In the summer months, Providence fails to achieve the federally defined primary or secondary standards for three air pollutants, namely Ozone, Carbon Monoxide and Total Susmended Particles (TSP). The Providence-Pawtucket-Warwick MSA, along with many of the urbanized areas of New England, were ranked in the third tier, called "Serious" by Environmental Protection Agency and Clean Air Act

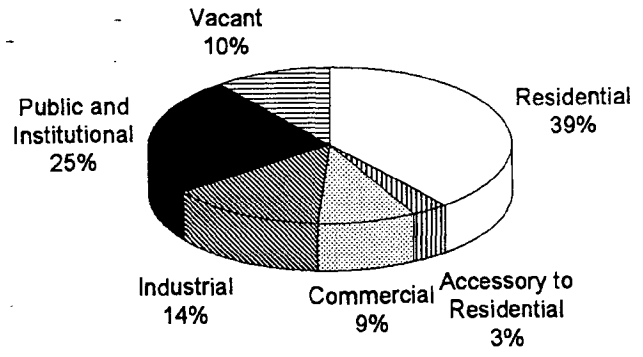
standards. By way of comparison, Los Angeles was rated "Extreme" and 8 other areas were rated "Severe." The city, however, remains equal to or better than national standards for Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulfur Dioxide.

Because Providence has recently begun to gain population, there is a growing need to address the problem of air pollution created by vehicular emissions and by the large industrial plants and other activities located within city limits. With the help of the Department of Environmental Management's Air Resources Division and the development of transit alternatives at the RI Department of Transportation, Providence must continue to address the problem of excessive Ozone levels.

The Topography. The topography of Providence includes many hills, including Federal, Smith, Neutaconkanut and College Hills, among others, which give each neighborhood its own character. These hills rise from the Woonasquatucket, Moshassuck and West River valleys and the Providence River as it passes through downtown and joins the Narragansett Bay. The variety of the natural landscape and, in conjunction with the major highways, makes every neighborhood especially distinct. The topography of the city makes it possible to see the downtown skyline from nearly every neighborhood, adding to the overall sense of connection shared by Providence residents.

Land Use. Providence consists of about 18.5 square miles (48 square kilometers). Between 1953 and 1986, the net developed land area in Providence decreased by about 5 percent while the proportion of land devoted to streets and highways increased by 20 percent, a result of the extensive highway construction that took place during that period. Overall, about 40 percent of the city is in residential use. Commercial use, which accounts for about 9 percent of land use, is generally confined to the major arterial streets of the city, as well as in the downtown area. Industrial uses account for 14 percent, and are scattered throughout the city. A large concentration of industrial uses are located along Allens Avenue corridor and include the Port of Providence. The city has three major industrial parks: Huntington Park, West River Park, and Silver Spring Park.

Providence Land Use



Source: City of Providence, Tax Assessor's Office, 1986

The second most frequent land use in Providence is public and institutional, which accounts for about one out of every four acres of land in Providence. These include a variety of private schools, colleges and universities, hospitals and medical facilities, as well as city, state, and federal government properties and buildings. About 10 percent of the land area in Providence is vacant and undeveloped. Most of the undeveloped land in Providence is platted and consists of vacant lots, many of which were once developed.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space. Providence contains 149 parks which are located throughout the city. There are also 44 playgrounds, 6 indoor recreation centers, 32 tennis courts, 44 baseball / softball fields, 26 basketball courts and 7 neighborhood swimming pools. Overall, parks and open spaces account for 1,332 acres, or 15% of the total land area (excluding streets and highways) in the city. The largest open space, Roger Williams Park, consists of 432 acres of fields, lakes and a regionally reknown zoo and is located in the southeast corner of the city.

Housing. The housing stock of Providence can be characterized by three basic housing types: the single family home, the duplex, and the "triple decker." There are relatively few structures which contain more than 4 or 5 units. Therefore, the possibilities of purchasing and renting out structures are open to a wider range of investors than is possible in other cities. That phenomena has worked to both the benefit and detriment of the physical and visual fabric of the city. There are concentrations of vacant and abandoned lots and buildings in the areas of the city which generally correspond to the proposed enterprise community boundaries. These areas are direct detriments to the urban fabric of those neighborhoods.

City Departments and Agencies. Because the requirements for a strong urban fabric largely depend upon physical structures and spaces, many of the resources which can be brought to bear on these problems are controlled by city government. The Department of Planning & Development is the city department primarily concerned with these issues. The department provides staff support to a number of entities which are more specifically charged with enhancing and maintaining the city's urban fabric.

These governmental departments include the Providence Redevelopment Agency, which handles many of the real estate transactions and is the arm of city government which has the powers of eminent domain. The City Plan Commission is charged with the responsibility of implementing Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan, a document that, in essence, establishes guiding criteria for all facets of Providence's built environment and open land. The Providence Public Building Authority works in conjunction with the PRA. The Zoning Board of Review and City Plan Commission are also charged with the responsibility of developing and enforcing zoning regulations and compliance with the comprehensive plan. The Historic District Commission reviews applications for all exterior building modifications within the several local historic districts.

Other key municipal agencies include the Department of Inspections & Standards, which is responsible for code enforcement and ensures compliance with the city building code. The Department of Public Works maintains roadways. The Department Parks & Recreation ensures the livability of the city through the maintenance and creation of parks and recreational facilities.

State Departments and Agencies. The actions of several statewide agencies are also relevant for the urban fabric of Providence. Department of Environmental Management, Department of Transportation, Department of Economic Development, Department of Administration: Division of Statewide Planning. The Narragansett Bay Commission manages the sewage system for the Providence metropolitan area. The Providence Water Supply Board uses the Scituate Reservoir, located approximately 10 miles to the west of the city, in supplying drinking water to much of the northern half of the state.

Private and Nonprofit Organizations. Several large private and nonprofit institutions, most notably the city's hospitals, colleges and universities, also significantly alter the urban fabric in Providence, particularly built environment and traffic patterns. Private lending institutions play a critical role in providing needed capital for investment and reinvestment in residential, commercial, and industrial buildings and properties. Real state developers also shape the fabric of the city on both large and small scales. Other important players that seek to influence the shape of Providence include the Providence Preservation Society, Save the Bay, Project B.A.S.I.C., Keep Providence Beautiful, Direct Action for Rights & Equality and the Mary Elizabeth Sharpe Tree Fund, to name only a few.

Voices from the Community

There was a sense that absentee owners of properties and tax titles were the largest source of neighborhood problems. Too many times, the same unaccountable and irresponsible landlords and speculators purchase property in low-income areas and caused neighborhood disinvestment. The laws intended to prevent the complete abandonment of property and to prevent dumping on vacant lots have no teeth and are ineffective. There was also a sense that large institutional nonprofits are allowed to expand and purchase properties in such a way as to harm the character of many Providence neighborhoods. The fabric of these areas surrounding these large institutions are continuously threatened with disruptive developments and the construction of parking lots. This notion was part of the overall sense that community control over funds and other resources did not exist.

There was also a strong sense that there was no coordination between city and state officials in infrastructure maintenance. Often, the "low-income" neighborhoods were ignored during infrastructure maintainence and improvements. The overall sentiment was that, due to a misuse of federal funds, the residential neighborhoods of the city were being ignored in favor of so-called "big ticket" projects which benefit those who do not live in the city.

"Coordinate the development of land use patterns with contiguous municipalities to ensure that adjacent land uses are compatible."

— Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan

"Tax sales of property mainly benefit a few capital-heavy experienced speculators, who use the opportunity to buy more land. Give the City the ability to take land before it hits tax sale. Restrict tax sale purchases to buyers with clean records. We also need to put some teeth into the Housing Court and get equity in Code Violations."

— A task force participant

"What makes Providence special? What makes us different from Bridgeport, Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, Nashua, New Bedford or Fall River? We should address and promote the advantages we have beyond those cities. These include a socially active community, a pervasive and vibrant sense of place, an intact historical fabric of houses, and at last a new attitude towards the water resources, among many other attributes.

— A task force participant

"In the environment, the are so many things that are wrong. There is so much pollution in the air. If people weren't too lazy to walk, then the smoke from the cars wouldn't have to burn. If people would recycle, then we wouldn't have a city that gives off so much pollution."

— An elementary school student

Strategies

1. ***Create complete residential blocks.*** A stable population base, living on contiguous residential blocks, is the foundation upon which thriving neighborhoods are built. Vacant lots, land speculation, and some absentee property owners, work against the establishment of complete residential blocks. The city should have a housing policy which encourages residential stability by providing affordable housing which encourages a mix of owners and renters. Because of the significant detrimental effects on neighborhood life, property laws must work to minimize the resultant blight of vacant lots and vacant and abandoned buildings in disrepair. The pride and ownership of blocks and neighborhoods in turn addresses issues of crime prevention, maintenance of public spaces, and fostering environmental responsibility.

Next Steps

- A database of all vacant buildings (residential, commercial, industrial) and vacant lots should be maintained in order to accomplish housing, economic development and psychological blight removal goals. This could be done through the DPD or through the DIS. In order to accomplish this, there is a need to comprehensively canvas neighborhoods to get an accurate, one-time assessment. A coordinated effort on the part of the inspectors from DIS and those from DPD would be able to quickly establish a true and accurate list of vacant lots and buildings in a small amount of time. That information should quickly be processed disseminated to code enforcement officials, planners and housing providers.
- The changes to the State of Rhode Island Tax Title Law advocated in the Rhode Island State Legislature by the Providence DPD, the DIS and DARE should be brought into existence. Under today's laws, speculators are allowed to profit tremendously from owning numerous property tax liens and collecting rent and are not held responsible for the condition of the buildings.
- Attention should be paid to maintaining the "street wall" on both residential and commercial streets. Zoning should encourage the continuation of the existing "build to the street" pattern. In order to ensure smooth vehicular transportation, neighborhood retail streets should have a limited number of "curb cuts."
- Overnight parking on residential or arterial streets or on neighborhood vacant lots should be permitted because of the need for green space in back and side yards. In many of Providence's neighborhoods, the houses were built during the era of the street rail system and do not have sufficient clearance for the construction of a driveway. These areas of the city occasionally have vacant lots nearby. The city, through various neighborhood-based entities, could pave these lots and make them available to residents for a small fee for maintenance and plowing during the winter.
- Foster neighborhood decision-making capability, local land trusts and an emphasis on adequate and appropriate housing. The role of community development corporations and other neighborhood groups is integral in providing the voice of neighborhoods in land use planning decisions. The coordination of their expertise to support comprehensive neighborhood planning should be encouraged in order to eliminate vacant and abandoned lots and buildings.

- Address problems caused by "institutional zones" surrounding the universities and hospitals where residential streets are impacted. Encourage a better relationship between institutions and neighbors.
- Encourage the "husbandry" of land, encourage self-policing, clean up litter. Enforce and enhance the environmental laws concerning dumping on vacant lots throughout the city.
- Improve the physical quality of vacant, junk-filled land by developing easy-to-use mechanisms for turning control of vacant and abandoned land to adjacent property owners and neighborhood-based employers or agencies. Expand and enhance the Department of Planning's Special Vacant Building Program and Vacant Lot Program to improve outreach methodology and reduce cost to neighboring landowners.

2. ***A balance between residential, commercial, institutional and other land uses.*** There is a need to develop policy which encourages a stable residential base. This strategy must be supported by an attempt to address the comprehensive needs of the neighborhood through integrated land-use. Certain resources, services and facilities must be available for neighborhoods to be residentially viable. Neighborhood streets should be planned in order to best meet the needs of the community.

   The past expansion of large institutions in the city has often destroyed the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods. Large hospital parking lots, for example, have heavily impacted residential areas of South Providence. Hospital and higher education expansion should be redirected with neighborhood interests in mind. Neighborhood economic development should also be directed to support developing residential bases.

Next Steps

- Buildings should have clear typology and fit the existing character of the neighborhood. Open spaces should be mixed with other land uses and connected to institutions which will maintain responsibility for them.
- The social infrastructure, including the community centers, should be linked to libraries, open space and recreational areas. This can be done through appropriate property acquisition and through the zoning ordinance. The public library system should also be enhanced and promoted. The use of public buildings should join places in the community together. Public buildings should brings life to the neighborhoods and be more attractive places for families to meet.
- Parcel assemblage possibilities for industry should be facilitated through city agencies through new acquisition procedures. In order to accomplish goals set for economic development, a comprehensive inventory of available land should be prepared including possible acquisition methodology for vacant or abandoned structures.
- Re-examine the "Institutional Zones" system created for the hospitals, universities and colleges. Many feel that the system has not been fully successful in causing the institutions to be more responsive to neighborhood needs. There is also a demand for the recapturing lost yet still available house lots which are now used as parking lots. Universities and Hospitals should study and build vertical parking in above and below ground garages rather than horizontal parking which expands deeply into residential areas and disrupts both the street walls and the character of the community. These large

institutions should expand access and employment in the adjacent neighborhoods but redirect their physical development away from them.

3. ***More efficient use of streets and transportation.*** The focus on these streets, through both housing and economic development activities will revitalize neighborhoods. Mixed-use housing is becoming desirable in the wake of disinvestment of supermarkets and other stores. By ensuring the efficiency of the commercial and retail streets the interior residential streets will be more attractive places to live. Homebuyers must drive down these neighborhood commercial street to reach the residential interior streets, investment there will spawn investment in the interior. There are many components of this revitalization including the maintenance of the infrastructure, the appearance of the buildings and the efficiency of the mass transit system.

   Road design and maintenance and a better public transportation system play a particularly important role in promoting strong neighborhoods and a vibrant urban fabric. It is imperative that traffic patterns and new road construction do not destroy neighborhoods or disconnect certain parts of the city from others. Within neighborhoods, an effort should be made to plan streets so that they nurture a sense of locality and a foster pedestrian access and mobility.

   The role of public transportation needs to be reexamined given the other priorities of the task force. Currently, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) operates a radial busing system which is not conducive to intra-city travel. The fare system also discourages short trips within the city. Public transportation can enhance Providence's urban fabric by addressing the needs of city residents who live, work, and use the services of the city. Strategies should include a circular bus route and more reliable, regular service.

Next Steps

- Encourage the development of rational grids and traffic patterns which do not divide neighborhoods. In creating a balance between citywide and neighborhood transportation needs, residential areas will not be physically or psychologically disconnected with others.
- Develop a neighborhood oriented public transportation system with both "cross-town" and circular routes. RIPTA is already in the process of examining these types of routes for ridership potential. The smaller RIPTA buses are better equipped to travel the often narrow but heavily used streets which are currently used by the populace for cross-town travel. The inability for change in public transportation systems occasionally leads loss of federal funding. Providence needs to encourage the use of transit systems for the environmental and economic benefit of all residents.
- Develop and enhance a sense of place on commercial and retail streets through a "Main Street" program. Many agencies should coordinate their efforts in each of these mixed-use areas. The Providence Redevelopment Agency should physically improve the condition of the sidewalks and ensure the painting of stripes in the road surfaces. The PPHC should rehabilitate and market the vacant and abandoned housing while the MIDC and PEDC and RIDED should can improve neighborhood economic development. If all of these things are done at once, there will be an increased likelihood of investment of the residential blocks at the interior of the neighborhood.

4. ***Promote Environmental Responsibility.*** The need to promote environmental responsibility is closely tied to the issues of effective design and a local sense of ownership. In many respects, the infrastructure of the city is not currently able to maintain standards satisfactory by federal or other standards. The sewage overflow system is a pressing example of poor or inadequate design which is currently not meeting the needs of the city.

   Open space preservation and maintenance also fall under this need. Because recreational areas, parks, and green space are integral to the notions of complete residential blocks and integrated land use, the city must make reasonable and rational need-based planning decisions. Poor maintenance of open spaces and the overall environment in disadvantaged areas of the city leads to disparate conditions based on the income and political power of residents.

Next Steps

- Increase and enhance procedures designed to prevent dumping on vacant lots. Many low and moderate income neighborhoods have been severely impacted with vacant lots. In many cases, these same lots become even greater sources of blight when they are used as dumping grounds by those from outside the community. These offenders should be pursued more diligently and punishment for these crimes should be heavily increased in order to prevent further violations.
- Continue the efforts to meet federal regulations concerning air and water quality. Providence is not alone in this responsibility, the whole metropolitan area should strive to meet the guidelines in order to ensure not only the health of residents, but the avoidance of the loss of federal funds.
- Replant the city. This should be done through the use of the Mary Elizabeth Sharpe street tree fund in a comprehensive and targeted collaboration with the Department of Planning. The replanting should strive to beautify both residential and commercial streets in areas where there is a distinct lack of vegetation.

Assets and Opportunities

Providence Plan Housing Corporation. PPHC has recently embarked on a vacant and abandoned housing rehabilitation effort. This program should be great assistance in the struggle to eliminate blighting influences from many of Providence's neighborhoods. Their efforts are targeted in the "inner city" neighborhoods of the city where the highest level of disinvestment has occurred. The numerous neighborhood nonprofit agencies work in concert with the PPHC in working towards this end. In time and with perseverance, the problem can be dramatically reduced through this means.

The Woonasquatucket River Greenway Coalition. This new entity made up of the Trust for Public Land, the National Park Service, the Providence Department of Planning & Development, The Providence Plan, the Olneyville Businessmen's Association and many others, has recently embarked on the revitalization of Providence's major industrial river corridor in hopes to create an urban amenity where a forgotten river exists now.

The I-195 Relocation Project. This is a continuing project designed to both correct an eroding bridge and a sharp curve in the highway and, most importantly, reopen the mouth of the Providence River to development and pedestrian access. The scope of this project is both on a neighborhood level and regionwide, the Providence Department of Planing & Development, the Rhode Island Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are working together to implement this plan which will dramatically change the fabric of the city.

The Capital Center Project. The Capital Center Commission is the lead among numerous agencies involved in the development of a second downtown in Providence. A so-called "edge city" is being constructed between the existing financial district and the Rhode Island State Capital Building which will contain parcels for office and hotel development as well as the site of Water Place, an assortment of open space and river access.

Providence Place / Mall of New England. The State of Rhode Island. the City of Providence and the Pyramid Companies, a Syracuse, New York based developer have recently embarked on the construction of a new urban mall, directly linked to the new Rhode Island Convention Center and the ongoing Capital Center development.

Overnight Parking Permits. The Providence City Council has recently re-entered a discussion over the issuance of these permits with the Poilce and Fire Departments and the Department Public Works. The issue has been raised recently due to possible revenue collection for such permits and the argument that overnight parking will increase overcrowding in many of Providence's neighborhoods.

Combined Sewage Overflow Storage. The Narragansett Bay Commission is beginning the construction of new CSOs in hopes of limiting the overflow of hazardous materials into Narragansett Bay during heavy periods of precipitation. These new storage facilities are designed to decrease the pollutants in the Upper Bay and perhaps, allow more shellfishing and other activities to occur there.

The Special Vacant Lot Program. Administered by the City of Providence through the Providence Redevelopment Agency, this program is designed to facilitate the transfer of vacant lots to neighborhood groups, to adjacent property owners or to developers. The process of tracking these lots and more specifically, those which are available for acquisition, is difficult. That slows the implementation of what is otherwise a successful program.

The Special Vacant Building Program. This program, while not yet implemented, would allow for procedures similar to the Special Vacant Lot Program to be implemented through the use of the more than 700 vacant and

abandoned buildings in the city. These buildings are often loaded with various municipal and other liens causing the debt load to be more than the true worth of the building. These buildings range from single family residential buildings in otherwise stable neighborhoods to "triple deckers" in tenement-based areas to large industrial buildings near one of the rivers.

Changes in Property Tax Delinquency Procedures (Tax Title Law). The Department of Planning & Development, in conjunction with the Department of Inspections & Standards, is currently seeking passage of pending changes in state law concerning the sale of municipal property tax liens. The system in place, while serving to provide needed revenues to the city, has unfortunately lead to the speculative investment of those who seek profit rather than sustainable community development. The changes in the law would allow the Providence Redevelopment Agency to have "first right of refusal" of these foreclosable liens before they reach tax sale and would force those who purchase these liens to be significantly more responsible for the condition of the property.

The Interstate 195 Realignment / Old Harbor Area Project

Today, Interstate 195 joins Interstate 95 where downtown and Upper South Providence meet. After crossing the Providence River, the highway passes through the Fox Point neighborhood. The Washington Bridge then carries the road over the Seekonk River, through the nearby City of East Providence and towards Cape Cod. Through this large-scale program, the Downtown and Upper South Providence neighborhoods will be transformed in the most significant way since the displacement of residents and busineses which occured during the construction of the highways in the 1950s.

By moving a portion of Interstate 195 (the Providence River Bridge) to a new location south of the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier, it is hoped that residents will be able to move more smoothly through the city and residents will be inspired to revisit the nearly forgotten riverfront. The project will open up forty-four acres of land for new residential, commercial, recreational and institutional development, create new public access to the waterfront, and both physically and psychologically link the Old Harbor Area to the original retail core and to the ongoing Capital Center project.

Construction of the new bridge is slated to begin in 1997. Once the bridge is relocated, the creation of new buildings, rehabilitation of older structures, streets and open spaces can begin. The development potential includes 1.6 million square feet of office and retail space, 400,000 square feet of institutional space, 700,000 square feet of multipurpose space, a 300 room hotel, housing for 620 families and parking garages for 5,000 cars. ■

PPHC Impact Streets

Complementing its successful citywide homeowner loan programs, the Providence Plan Housing Corporation has recently adopted a more targeted neighborhood-based housing strategy. Working with CDC partners, the PPHC is designating several "Impact Streets" that will focus human and physical investment within a limited area. Impact Streets are intended to be either the most visible gateway to the neighborhood or the most problematic trouble spot, where dramatic turnaround can be affected within a 6 to 9 month period. They are selected by the PPHC and its CDC partners based on the following criteria:

- High density of distressed properties easily acquired within 6 months
- Acknowledged need for great change on the street to avoid further decay
- Proximity of nonprofit projects already underway or completed
- Cohesive identity and edges to produce visible and dramatic change
- Interested community homeowner base present or willing to purchase
- Opportunities for cooperation with other municipal programs, such as street trees, sidewalk improvement, and code enforcement.

To date, seven Impact Streets have been selected, six of which are located within the proposed Enterprise Community. The participating neighborhoods include Smith Hill, Olneyville, Mount Hope, West End, Elmwood, and South Providence.

Abandoned Housing acquisition and disposition are the two most crucial elements of the Impact Street Program. So far, the PPHC has been extremely successful in this area. On many Impact Streets, the PPHC and its nonprofit partners have acquired up to 75 percent of all abandoned houses. After acquisition, properties are "stabilized" by the PPHC, including painting or residing, porch and step rebuilding, fence repair, yard clean-up, reroofing if required, and removal of all debris. Windows will be attractively boarded from the inside and painted to complement the building. Until the property is sold or actively under renovation, the buildings will be monitored and the property maintained.

When the CDC partner can successfully develop the property within the accepted time frame, stabilized properties may be transferred to the CDC, with the PPHC taking responsibility for renovating the remaining properties. In all cases, however, marketing of renovated homes will be directed through the neighborhoods and led by community-based groups. .....Demolition activities will also be intensified with the Impact Street. Buildings that are so distressed as be deemed a public safety hazard by the DIS may be purchased and demolished by the PPHC with the property

being reallocated or developed for parking, opening space, or infill housing, as the neighborhood desires. ■

The Narragansett Bay Commission Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement Program

The Narragansett Bay Commission was established in 1982 with the task of improving water quality of Narragansett Bay and its tributaries. Currently, there are 86 combined sewer overflows (CSO) contributing to the degradation of Narragansett Bay. During heavy periods of rain, the flow through the NBC's existing CSOs frequently exceeds the capacity of the sewer system. As a result, untreated sewage is sent directly into our rivers and into Narragansett Bay. The overflow into the Bay has been a continual source of pollution in the Upper Bay, often requiring the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) to close parts of the Bay to shell fishing.

In March of 1993, after several years of study, the Narragansett Bay Commission approved a comprehensive Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement plan. The plan involves the construction of seven near surface storage tanks and tunnels proposed by the NBC will contain the sewage overflows, during periods of heavy rain. Then, after the storm has passed, the stored flows will be returned to the system for treatment.

The overflow into the Bay is in direct violation of the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972. The NBC has entered into a mutual consent agreement with the RIDEM to comply with the Federal Clean Water Act in a timely manner. The RIDEM has waived non-compliance fines, which could be as much as $25,000 per day, per violation, while the NBC works to implement the CSO abatement program. When CSO improvements have been completed. all CSOs that will no longer discharge shall be permanently plugged. The NBC has already plugged one CSO and plans to plug two more over the coming months.

Pending final RIDEM approval and the NBC's ability to secure financing, the Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement Project will begin construction in 1997. Construction will proceed in phases and is expected to take approximately twelve years before the entire project is complete. However, the water quality of Narragansett Bay is expected to continually improve throughout the duration of construction for the project. ■

River Rescue

The River Rescue program is dedicated to promoting stewardship for the rivers that flow through Providence through river monitoring and community education. The core component of River Rescue is a volunteer water quality monitoring program, and River Rescue includes other activities aimed at increasing public awareness and of appreciation for the state's urban rivers and streams. River Rescue was developed as a partnership between Citizens Bank, the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center and Rhode Island Sea Grant.

River Rescue volunteers have monitored the Blackstone, Moshassuck, Woonasquatucket, Pawtuxet and Ten Mile Rivers for chemical water quality since River Rescue began in October of 1990. The volunteers have accumulated an impressive amount of data on the rivers, measuring dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature and hardness and sampling for total suspended solids, nitrogen, phosphorus, cadmium, chromium, copper, nickel, lead, calcium and magnesium at a number of sites along the rivers. River Rescue data have demonstrated significant water quality improvements in the rivers during the last decade, and provide support for the public and private expenditures on pollution abatement in the watersheds.

The commitment of financial and human resources by partner organizations is responsible for river Rescue's success. Citizens Bank provides major funding for River Rescue and promotional support for the program. The URI Coastal Resources Center coordinates the River Rescue water quality testing program with technical and financial support from Rhode Island Sea Grant. ■

The Woonasquatucket River: Forming a New Community Coalition

It was a snow-chilled day in January of this year when The Providence Plan and the National Park Service announced an exciting new partnership and community venture: the Woonasquatucket River Coalition. Made up of community groups, statewide conservation organizations, educational institutions, and city and state agencies, the coalition aims to develop opportunities for recreation, education, conservation, and community and economic development along the river. The highest rated of the new projects that the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program has taken on this year, the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project has begun building momentum for broad-based community support .

Once home to a settlement of the Narragansett tribe, the Woonasquatucket — meaning "at the head of the tidewater" — became the center of Providence's 19th century textile manufacturing industry. Around it grew a thriving neighborhood. However, as textile production

moved to the southern United States, the factories began to close. As jobs declined, so did the energy and the population of the neighborhood. Now Olneyville, one of the city's most distressed communities with the highest concentration of vacant houses, sees new hope as people come together to create, nurture and give birth to a "green" vision.

Raising the public's awareness about the river has been among the coalition's primary goals for its initial six months of activities. Partnerships and activities focused on the river during the first six months of this year have included collaboration with a local university, an education outreach program, library exhibit, guided river walks, a cleanup, and an early June "Woonasquatucket River Greenway Festival." The following highlights just a few of the many research and outreach successes for the project's first six months:

- *Participation by Brown University's Environmental Studies Program.* In roundtable discussions with coalition members, students identified prime areas for investigation. In all, the class produced nine studies and at the course's end, turned over all research to the coalition.
- *An educational outreach program* developed with Save the Bay, City Year and The Providence Plan for the Olneyville and nearby communities' elementary and middle schools.
- *"The Woonasquatucket River: Linking the Past, Finding the Future," an exhibit at the Olneyville Branch Library.* Jointly presented by The Providence Plan, River Rescue/ University of Rhode Island Coaster Resources Center, and the Olneyville Library and coordinated by a University of Rhode Island student intern, the exhibit was on view from the late March to early June.
- *The Woonasquatucket River Greenway Festival.* Held in Olneyville Square on Saturday, June 11, the festival was the largest coalition collaboration yet. Supported by Citizens Bank and Olneyville businesses, it featured a variety of activities, entertainment and information.

The future for positive developments along the Woonasquatucket River looks bright. For instance, the coalition has met extensively with other state agencies to discuss future recreational uses for the currently underutilized parks that provide great potential for enhanced recreational use by the public and each can provide easy public access to the river. Additionally, the Trust for Public Land recently unveiled its Green Cities Initiative, a plan to provide support for the purchase of land for new parks in urban areas across the country and to provide local groups with technical assistance for land acquisition. Providence is one among 12 cities that the trust will assist, with the Woonasquatucket River the prime focus. ■

Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Free Transit Service for AFDC Recipients

The State of Rhode Island has established a temporary program which provides bus transportation for all AFDC recipients who are at or below poverty level. It is estimated that the

total AFDC population in the State is approximately 62,000 people. The information developed by this pilot program will be used to demonstrate both the need and cost of a monthly pass for such a program on a permanent basis, and the feasibility of extending this service to all clients eligible for the Governors Health Care initiative (RITE CARE), scheduled to be implemented on June 1, 1994.

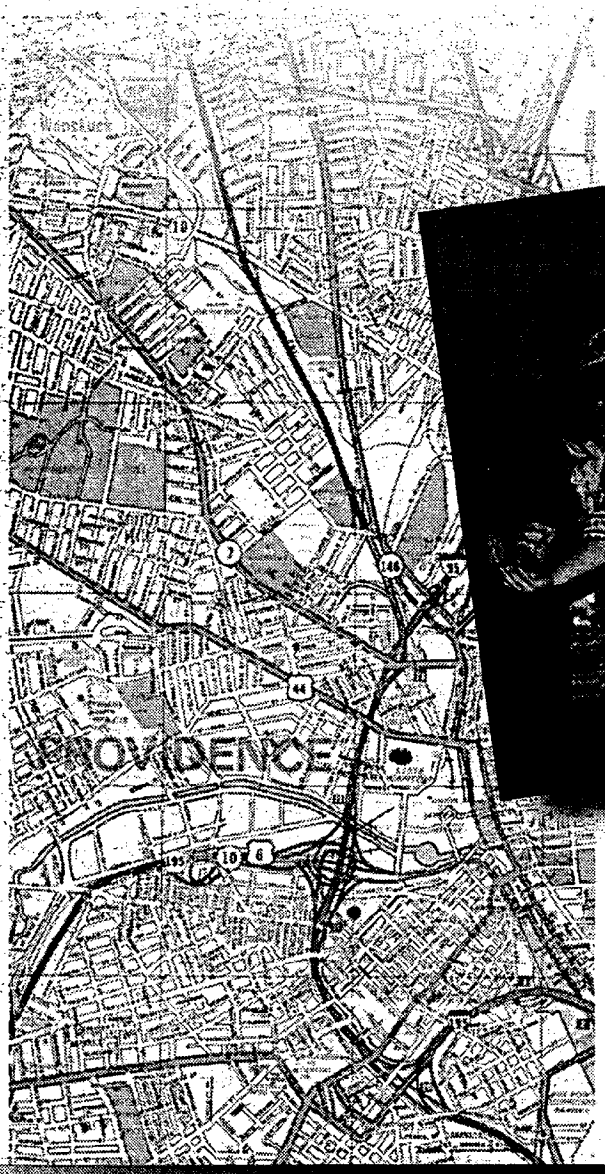
The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority provides a monthly pass to the adult AFDC population upon completing a Transportation Eligibility Application. The eligible recipient only needs to present the proper photo identification (AFDC Photo I.D. Card) and a recent AFDC check stub. During this program, a monthly pass will be issued to all adults or heads of households who are enrolled in the AFDC program. Children of the AFDC recipient will also be allowed to ride free when accompanied by the adult passholder. The program was only scheduled to operate for two months, November and December of 1993, or until the $150,000 demonstration budget is exhausted. The program has been so successful that it has been extended on a month to month basis and will continue until budget is depleted.

RIPTA determines the proper zone of travel for each applicant. The bus system is made up of four zones throughout the state of Rhode Island with each zone being approximately 7 linear miles. Zone determination is made by developing a profile of the applicant as to travel habits and frequent destinations. The zone pass is issued at the time of application on the basis of the applicant's travel profile and the need expressed by the AFDC person at the time of the application procedure.

For example, an individual who resides in Providence and works or attends school in the same city would be eligible for a 1-Zone pass. Persons wishing to travel to other zones are expected to pay the zone difference in cash. It is anticipated that 85% of all the recipients' travel will occur within a 1-Zone radius.

The following are the funding sources for the above program: The RI Deptartment of Human Services (Title IV-F (Federal Match)) for $37,500, The RI Deprtment of Transportation / Governor's Office (Intergovernmental Transfer) for 25,000 and RIPTA (Gasoline Tax) for $12,500. These contributions add up to $75,000 per month. ■

Arts, Culture, & Historic Preservation



Chapter 12
Arts, Culture, and Historic Preservation

Vision Statement

Providence, a city where art is created, cultures are shared, and historic architecture is preserved, will become a premier arts and cultural destination for residents and visitors from across the nation. We will work better to recognize and capitalize on our existing physical and human resources, the hundreds of artists who live and work here, the extensive inventory of historic buildings, our multi-cultural diversity, and the commitment of people willing to invest their time, talents and finances. Our many arts and cultural groups will not only continue to enhance the quality of life in Providence but, through better recognition and coordination, they will continue to make substantial contributions to the economic health of the city and region.

Context

One of the principal reasons why Providence was selected by *Newsweek* magazine in 1989 as one of America's ten best places to live and work, and why the city was one of five cities to receive a Livable Cities award by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in June 1994, is the city's abundance of arts, cultural facilities, and its strong commitment to historic preservation.

Providence contains one of the largest collections of historic properties and buildings of any city in the United States. There are currently 26 districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the entire downtown which contains one of the largest collections of 19th century commercial buildings in America, or more then 12 percent of the city's gross land area. Within these 26 districts are 5,000 historic properties, including 100 individual buildings. In addition to the National Register Districts, hundreds of other buildings have been identified as potential candidates for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Providence is a college town with seven colleges and universities. These include Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence College, Rhode Island College, Johnson and Wales University, and campuses for the University of Rhode Island and the Community College of Rhode Island. Several vocational and technical institutions are also located in the city.

The Rhode Island School of Design, founded in 1877, has had a long commitment to excellence in design and is considered to be one of the premier art and design schools in the country. As a consequence, thousands of working artists and designers live and work in Providence. In fact, Providence has the largest number of artists per capita of any state in the Union, largely due to RISD's presence in the city. Through their education programs, design and technical expertise, informational resources, art exhibits, and more, RISD is a very important citywide resource.

In addition to the Providence Public Library, which maintains a central library downtown and nine branch libraries throughout the city, there are over fifteen other private and public libraries in Providence. The largest, Brown University's John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library has about 1.5 million volumes. Several libraries are noted for their rare collections. These include the Providence Athenaeum, and three smaller libraries on the Brown University campus—the Annmary Brown Memorial Library, the John Carter Brown Library and the John Hay Library. Other smaller resource libraries include The Providence Preservation Society's collection of architecture, decorative arts, and preservation planning books, and the Rhode Island Historical Society's unique genealogical resource materials and maps.

There are 12 theaters in Providence, including the Providence Performing Arts Center, which seats 3,200 people, the Veterans Memorial Auditorium, and the nationally known Trinity Repertory Company. The Providence Civic Center, which seats 13,500, was opened in 1972 and hosts sports, exhibitions and cultural events. The Civic Center has been the venue for major NCAA tournament events in basketball and hockey, and will host figure skating championship events. The new Rhode Island Convention Center stands to bring in thousands of visitors to the city and boost our economy with its 100,000 square-foot exhibition hall, 20,000 square-foot ballroom, and 23 additional meeting rooms. in December 1993.

Providence is also home to a magnificent 430-acre Victorian park, Roger Williams Park, which includes a zoo, a natural history museum, Japanese garden, a neoclassical temple for music performances, several restored historic structures that include a boathouse and covered walking bridge, and amusements that include paddle boats and an historic carousel. It remains the major public recreational facility in the city: its jogging paths are filled much of the year, its lakes a popular place for boating and skating, and its zoo continuing to draw thousands annually.

Museums and galleries are plentiful in Providence. The largest museum, the RISD Museum of Art, has permanent holdings ranging from ancient Egyptian to contemporary art, including graphics, costumes and textiles. Also noteworthy, the Johnson & Wales Culinary Museum & Archives maintains what is perhaps the world's largest collection of cookbooks and food-related objects (over 200,000 items), including Egyptian kitchen tools from the third millennium B.C. Artists galleries are sprinkled throughout downtown and the East Side, including one of the oldest art clubs in the country, The Providence Art Club.

Rhode Island is one of only a few states that offer tax incentives for the restoration of owner-occupied historic houses that are listed on the Rhode Island Register of Historic Places. Homeowners can qualify for a state income tax credit equal to 10 percent of the cost of restoration work. The owner must spend at least $2,000 on restoration, and the maximum credit which may be taken in one year is $500.

Voices from the Community

From information gathered at the *ProVision* Community Workshop, eight weeks of task force meetings, as well as from written surveys and community poster sessions, Arts, Culture & Historic Preservation ranked the highest among the 12 policy areas in the baseline assessment component of the community-based strategic planning process. Providence would not be Providence without its cultural diversity, visual and performing arts, remarkable architecture, historic neighborhoods, and outstanding preservation achievements. Some thoughts and feelings are shared below:

"In economically-depressed times, it is easy to argue that the arts are a luxury that only wealthier societies can afford. But it is precisely in these times of economic unrest that the arts become so important, for the arts have a power that far exceeds their nominal price tag."

— Editor local arts publication

"Arts, culture and historic preservation are our greatest assets in this city...let's not overlook the obvious...let's make them all a more profitable business."

— Task force participant

"Providence's size is, perhaps, its greatest asset, along with its arts, culture and historic preservation...this state would be nothing without them."

— Local newspaper columnist

"We must start with the schools by teaching our children respect for each others cultures."

— Task Force Participant

"Studies have shown that the arts offer children an alternate means of expression that actually results in less crime and violence"

— Artist

"The great potential contribution of preservation to American life is not in the saving of structures per se, but in the transformation of the values by which we live as a people."

— Roderick S. French, The Eternal Present: The Beginnings of Architecture, 1964

Strategies

Quality of life and pride of place are essential components of pleasant urban living, and they exist in part due to the presence of visual and performing artists and arts organizations, cultural sensitivity and sharing, and preservation of historic architecture and neighborhoods. Without these extraordinary assets, Providence would be a very different place—a city void of life and energy. The contribution they make to our city must not be underestimated. Unfortunately, much of Providence still remains undiscovered and under-appreciated by many local residents and visitors. Arts and culture are not always accessible or affordable to the many who live here. Also, there needs to be further commitment to and support for the individual artist, arts and cultural institutions, as well as preservation organizations, so that they may continue to grace the city with their undying passion to their work and their surroundings. The Arts, Culture and Historic Preservation Task Force proposed the following strategies and recommendations to ensure continued progress in this policy area:

1. ***Promote, market, organize, and coordinate efforts regarding arts, culture and historic preservation in Providence.***

Next Steps

- Develop strong collaborations among the arts, culture and preservation organizations, and as a result, both human and financial resources will be effectively utilized and/or leveraged.
- Address tourism as major industry in Providence. Build upon existing Greater Providence Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development to address heritage tourism and the need to make Providence a premier arts and cultural destination.
- Establish small business association for artists and/or offshoot of the State Department of Economic Development to provide them with the necessary training and resources, to succeed in business.
- Expand local media coverage including print and electronic media, and ensure that cultural sensitivity is considered in all promotional efforts and reaches all people in all neighborhoods. For example, the media should not only cover performances at Trinity Repertory Theatre, but also promote the smaller neighborhood ethnic festivals.
- Support the creation of the Arts and Entertainment District in downtown realizing the positive impact it has on the city's economic development, and develop the proposed Banner Trail and all that it encompasses.
- Hold more multi-cultural events, like First Night Providence, to celebrate Providence's unique variety of arts and culture. This wonderful diversity greatly contributes to endless social and economic opportunities.
- Organize more year-round theme events in downtown.
- Develop first-run movie theater in downtown; become part of the National Performance Network.
- Expand Farmers' Market in Kennedy Plaza and increase variety of vendors to include local performing artists, visual artists and craftspeople.

- Create an "arts bus," a dinner-and-show package that would include transportation to and from sites.

2. ***Encourage and support adaptive re-use of vacant and abandoned structures, especially those of historical significance, in downtown and throughout the city.***

Next Steps

- Provide tax credits and other incentives to develop artists lofts and affordable housing. Traditionally, artists have pioneered the repopulation of urban areas that have lost their original function and market. What lures them are precisely those characteristics that may intimidate more conventional users.
- Unify building, fire, safety codes to eliminate contradictory regulations and encourage residential, commercial, and recreational uses. This is perhaps the greatest barrier behind idle development downtown and it must be addressed by the Department of Inspections and Standards and the State Fire Marshall's Office..
- Convert large-scale vacant building in downtown into the Arts Mart, as described in the Providence Foundation's Banner Trail proposal. The arts community feels that a downtown arts facility would generally offer the greatest legitimacy and visibility for presentation of visual and performing arts, expanding on the AS220 model.

3. ***Make arts education a priority in the schools.*** Through the theory and practice of art, children and youth are exposed to invaluable learning. They gain the understanding and appreciation for other peoples and cultures—their similarities as well as their differences.

Next Steps

- Revise course curriculum in schools, especially in grade schools, to emphasis art education and appreciation.
- Increase funding to Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, for example, and other arts organizations that support arts education programming -- Art is typically the first program to be cut when school budgets are tight.
- Develop more community-based arts education programming and collaboration between local colleges and universities and primary schools, as well as neighborhood community centers.

4. ***Make the arts and culture more affordable and accessible to everyone—eliminate attitudinal and social divide. Art is something to be shared and enjoyed by everyone.***

Next Steps

- Provide special reduced rates to those individuals, families or groups who would normally not be able to afford to attend cultural events, e.g. Trinity's Pay What You Can program.

Assets and Opportunities

Providence has an abundance of arts organizations, from small nonprofits to nationally known arts institutions, a committed preservation community and a remarkable inventory of historic architecture, especially in the downtown core. Providence also has a business community that is actively involved in the arts and regularly supports them and political leaders that appreciate the value of the arts in and of themselves as well as for their educational and economic importance. While it would be extremely difficult to list every asset or opportunity available with respect to arts, culture and historic preservation in Providence, as well as all the programs in effect, the following is a list of the principal organizations, plans or programs at work in Providence:

Arts & Culture

***Rhode Island State Council on the Arts** (RISCA)* was founded in 1967, two years after Senator Claiborne Pell's historic legislation established the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The NEA charter provided that each US state and territory would have a designated agency to receive and disburse federal funds in support of the arts. RISCA is a tremendous resource to artists in Providence and provides funding to Arts-in-Education programs throughout the school systems, as well as to visual and performing arts organizations throughout the state. In addition, they provide grants for individual artists, Artists-in-Residence, Artists Project grants and oversee the Art in Public Places program. A committee of artists make the selections; no member of the RISCA staff has any input into which artist is selected.

The Providence Foundation, an affiliate of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, is a private nonprofit organization which plays a critical role in the planning of downtown Providence. Its primary focus is to create an environment that is conducive to economic development and sustained investment in downtown. The Foundation identifies and acts upon opportunities; targets projects and policies that have a catalytic effect; and coordinates projects and groups involved in the downtown. The Foundation brings private sector expertise to the development of plans and projects. An important initiative they are currently working on is the creation of the *Arts & Entertainment District* which includes issues around artists loft housing, as well as *The Banner Trail* project, and other physical improvements in downtown.

***Total Arts Providence** (TAP),* established in the Spring of 1993, is a collective of professional visual and performing arts organizations and arts institutions within Providence, that work to ensure the arts community's active on-going participation in the cultural and economic development of the city.

AS220 is a nonprofit arts center that provides low-rent residential and work studios to 25 artists, exhibition space, and a performance space for all RI performing artists and musicians. Its primary role is the maintenance of an uncensored and unjuried forum for the arts, and it is supported by studio rents, events admission fees, grants, fund raisers, and a great deal of volunteer help. AS220 is responsible for the recent purchase and rehabilitation of a blighted and mostly vacant three-story building in downtown Providence. AS220 stands out as a model for the city, and represents positive growth and collaboration.

Neighborhood-based, nonprofit arts organizations, like *CITYARTS* and *The Music School,* are invaluable programs for the youth in the city, especially minority youth. Through the discovery of visual and performing arts, high-risk children and youth gain self-esteem and learn self-discipline.

Rhode Island Convention Center, completed in December 1993, stands to bring in thousands of visitors to the city and boost our economy with its 100,000 square-foot exhibition hall, 20,000 square-foot ballroom, 23 additional meeting rooms, and two parking garages that can accommodate 2,400 cars. Its

development has also spurred streetscape improvements along the main connector streets to the historic downtown core.

Historic Preservation

The Providence Preservation Society, along with its real estate affiliate, the PPS Revolving Fund, Inc., educates, advocates and serves as watchdog for citywide preservation activity.

The Providence Historic District Commission, the 13-member commission was established by City Council in 1960 to protect and preserve buildings and districts "which reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history." The commission reviews all plans affecting the exterior appearance of any structure or site in any of the four designated local historic districts, which make up approximately 200 acres in Providence.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, the state office for historic preservation. It is Rhode Island's only statewide historic preservation program which identifies and protects historic and prehistoric sites, buildings and districts. RIHPC follows the Secretary of the Interior' Standards for Rehabilitation. Some programs offered by RIHPC are the Federal Tax Incentives Program, the Historic Preservation Easement Program, and the Historical Preservation Loan Fund Program, as well as administering State income tax incentives for the preservation of owner-occupied historic homes.

Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (SWAP) is private nonprofit organization. SWAP's mandate is to save abandoned housing from destruction and to serve as a broker between owners of such houses and individuals who wish to renovate them as their residence. The primary objective is to rehabilitate deteriorated houses for low and moderate income homeowners.

Specific Plans & Programs

Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan developed by The City Plan Commission and the Department of Planning and Development is a plan for growth and change for Providence, and arts, culture, and historic preservation are all included this document.

The Preservation Plan, the historic preservation element of *Providence 2000,* sets broad policies and recommendations, and stresses the need to integrate preservation into the mainstream of Providence life so that the city's extraordinary array of historic resources are not only well protected but can serve as catalysts for the city's continuing economic development.

The Downcity Plan as well as its *Implementation Plan,* which followed the public five-day design session led by nationally known town planner Andres Duany. The purpose of this session, and following reports was to re-examine the downtown's old retail core and set strategies and recommendation for its revitalization. The Downcity Task Force was created and continues to meet.

Playing Downtown, the report of The Providence Foundation's Arts & Entertainment District Task Force, which assumes that only a major collaborative effort among the leading arts and entertainment institutions can provide a long-term solution to revitalizing downtown, entertaining visitors, and most importantly, preserving a major cultural aspect of the lives of all Rhode Islanders.

The Banner Trail, as proposed by The Providence Foundation, is a comprehensive program for the Arts & Entertainment District in downtown Providence which includes the creation of colorful banners and signage, information kiosks, public art, cultural events database, and more.

The Banner Trail

The Banner Trail is a key component of the proposed Arts and Entertainment District in Downtown Providence. While this concept is not a unique one to other cities across the country, Providence has what it takes, and more, to make The Banner Trail a reality. And, the revitalization of Downtown depends on it.

The Banner Trail will increase public knowledge and appreciation of the art, history, architecture and hospitality of Downtown in a unified way that will showcase the City's remarkable resources to residents and visitors alike. More than just banners, this concept includes three information centers along the trail, companion publications like guide books and maps, a cultural events database which will provide a computerized list of all the events taking place along the Trail and beyond, foyer galleries in downtown office buildings, as well as the creation of the Arts Mart, a factory-sized building, which will hold studio, exhibit and retail space.

Although Rhode Island is nationally recognized for the number and caliber of its visual and performing arts (there are more visual artists per capita than in any other city in the U.S.), no permanent studio-related retail outlet exists where residents and visitors can purchase art. The Banner Trail is a much-needed feature of the proposed downtown Arts & Entertainment District and for the city as a whole. It will link, promote and celebrate Providence's arts, architecture, history and culture.

"It is projected that by the year 2002, tourism will be the number one industry in Rhode Island, attracting between 55-60 million people annually. The Banner Trail will be a vital component to the marketing plans of the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development, the Rhode Island Convention Center and the Greater Providence Convention and Visitors Bureau. A comprehensive plan for the Trail is being developed to promote The Banner Trail to both residents and visitors." — The Providence Foundation ■

CITYARTS

In the summer of 1992, St. Michael's Church, in collaboration with the Elmwood Community Center, established the Street Arts program. Their mission was to create a citywide visual and performing arts center in one of the City's most distressed areas. Street Arts sought to provide children and young adults opportunities to create art in a professionally structured and safe environment.

The resulting summer program was successful in every way. One hundred forty neighborhood youth participated in six to eight weeks of full-time arts experience and production,

coordinated by four neighborhood artists and sixteen artisan assistants. In addition to daily experiences in dance, jewelry making, portraiture, pottery, costuming, music (from a variety of cultures and in five languages), theater skills, and face painting, there were trips to the Children's Museum, the Rhode Island School of Design's Museum of Art, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Finally, a "Night of Music" and a "Gallery Opening" were held at summer's end to provide community recognition for the young artists.

These events were not only well attended, they also focused the attention of many youth, neighborhood residents, the Providence arts community, city officials, and the community police on the positive impact of Street Arts. These events also promoted awareness of the talents, abilities, motivation and commitment of our city's youth to create art in many forms. As a result, a group formed to increase the summer program into a fully developed arts center with year-round programming. In 1993 a building feasibility study was completed and CITYARTS began in earnest to acquire a building for its homesite.

To date, CITYARTS has received both private and public contributions. They are currently seeking additional funds in support of the acquisition and rehabilitation of the Berkander Building. Also, RISD has recently been contacted for additional support and a proposed collaborative effort. ■

Providence Receives City Livability Award

What Makes Providence Livable?

Providence's rich historic character, vibrant ethnic and social diversity, dynamic visual and performing arts, world class educational institutions, and scenic waterfront location all promote the quality of life for residents and make Providence a very livable city.

"By 1990, suburbanization and economic decline had closed all of the Downtown's major retail stores; Downtown had become a 9-5 workplace. Traditional revitalization strategies were no longer feasible in the new economic reality." It was critical to respond to this increasing problem, and it was determined that the visual and performing arts in Providence were a tremendous asset to build on and that an arts and entertainment district be created.

The Arts and Entertainment District program, as proposed by Mayor Vincent A. Cianci, Jr. in 1991, plays a critical role in making Providence a livable city. The program will strengthen existing arts and entertainment organizations; attract new artists and arts groups to live and work downtown; and, encourage activities and programs that support arts and entertainment in the downtown. The Arts and Entertainment District provides a basis for 24-hour activity in Providence's historic Downcity, and creates a lively safe neighborhood filled with people,

businesses and events. Also, arts and cultural activities provide emotional and intellectual stimulation and solace to a wide socioeconomic spectrum of families, students, singles, elders and others to residents and visitors to Providence. These activities also support other economic ventures in downtown, including the adaptive reuse of historic structures for artist studios and housing, which in turn generates revenues that will finance programs and improvements in neighborhoods throughout the city.

In June, the United States Conference of Mayors honored Mayor Cianci with a 1994 City Livability Award for outstanding leadership and for establishing creative and effective programs for making Providence a more livable city. His strong support of the arts and preservation for establishing an Arts and Entertainment District has created greater opportunities for artists and arts organizations alike. Progress is beginning to take place downtown and much of that is owed to increasing appreciation of the arts, architecture, history and cultural diversity that exist in Providence. ■

The Music School, Inc.

The Music School, Inc. was founded in 1987 to provide a high quality performing arts education to children, youth, and adults in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. The school is one of 220 member schools that belong to the National Guild of Community Schools for the Arts and was cited in 1990 as the fastest growing school in the history of the Guild. Member schools include Berkeley and the New England Conservatory, as well as approximately 38 others. Students are offered a wide range of supplemental and developmental classes to enhance instrumental and social abilities. Classes offer comprehensive knowledge of music.

Since its founding, the school has been sensitive to the needs of the community as a whole, and has been particularly active in reaching out to low income, minority children and families in urban neighborhoods in Providence, as well as in other nearby communities. Close cooperative working relationships have been developed with community centers, day care programs, housing developments, churches, health and human service agencies, Head Start, and the Providence public schools. The school is also planning a collaborative effort with the Providence Police Department and Drug Free Schools to establish a Drum and Bugle Crop within the housing developments in the city. This will be a multi-cultural project whereby the uniform and music will express the rich heritage of those involved.

The non-profit school will receive $210,000 over the next three years as one of six community arts programs nationwide chosen by the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, a charity that supports arts education. The Music School is currently working on the development of a

strategic plan as it hopes to organize a capital campaign in 2 to 3 years to rehabilitate a 36,000 square foot building to create the Rhode Island School for the Performing Arts, adding dance, theater and creative arts therapy programs. ■

Providence is Nationally Recognized for Preservation Efforts

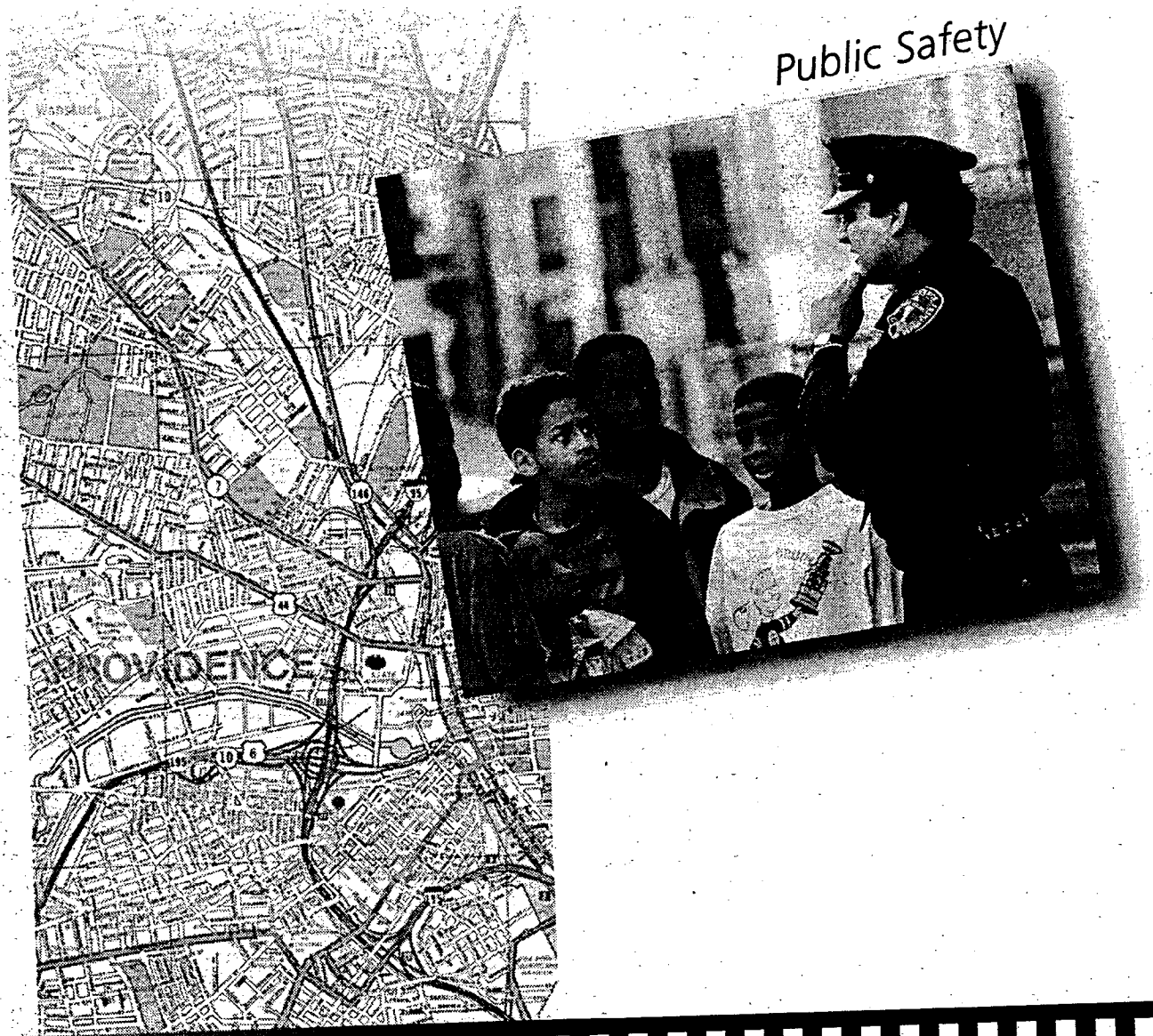
Providence is nationally recognized for its preservation efforts and achievements and the City's built environment is one to be proud of. As in other cities in the late 1950s and early 60s, much of Providence, especially Downtown, was eroded, erased, or transformed by the crashing waves of urban renewal. It is said that one of the only positive things that came out of that time was the creation of preservation groups who, thankfully, due to their great foresight, commitment and hard work, fought back to protect and preserve the valuable historic resources in our cities.

The success of Providence's architectural heritage is due mainly to the establishment of The Providence Preservation Society and to those visionaries who fought hard and stood firmly in front of the wrecking ball. When the Providence Preservation Society was founded in 1956, who would have imagined that, a generation later, it would not only be one of the most important and effective organizations in Rhode Island, but a model of its kind--imitated around the country, and universally admired?

In 1991, the Providence Preservation Society received a National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Trust recognized PPS for its 35-year commitment to protecting and preserving Providence's built environment, including neighborhood revitalization. Of its many successes throughout the years, the annual Festival of Historic Houses and the Children's Heritage Education Program are absolute showcase programs. In 1993, the Festival accommodated over 3,500 residents and visitors and Children's Heritage Education Program served 5,500 students, educating them on Providence's social and architectural history through lectures and walking tours.

The Providence Preservation Revolving Fund, Inc. was incorporated in 1980 as an affiliate of PPS. Through ownership, development, sale of property, rehabilitation loans and technical assistance, the Revolving Fund is directly involved in historic property restoration and neighborhood revitalization. The Revolving Fund operates a capital loan pool of over $750,000 from public and private sources. Since 1980, the Fund has made over $1.75 million in rehear loans in the targeted low-income National Register neighborhoods of the Armory District, North Elmwood, and Upper South Providence to rehab 90 houses, including 21 previously abandoned buildings. Revolving Fund activity has encouraged a number of property owners to renovate their houses and has stimulated sensitive new development in these areas. The PPS Revolving Fund believes that historic preservation is a key to developing a renewed sense of pride and stability which will promote reinvestment within neighborhood and commercial areas. ■

Public Safety



Chapter 13
Public Safety

Vision Statement

Providence will be a city in which all who live, work, and visit will feel safe and comfortable. Our vision encompasses all aspects of safety, from personal and property crime, to safety from threat of fire or other physical hazards. Our vision is of a city in which there is communication and collaboration between public safety agencies and the people that they serve; where individuals and public safety officers and officials show respect for one another; where people are willing to help each other, regardless of their ethnic heritage or socio-economic standing, and where neighborhoods are places reflecting residents' pride and caring for one another.

Context

Providence has faced many challenges in becoming a safe city for all. Recent statistics show that Providence has experienced a decrease in serious crimes during the 1990s. In fact, overall serious crimes declined by 5.4 percent between 1991 and 1992 and were down 17 percent from 1990. Misdemeanors, however, increased dramatically, rising 25.9 percent between 1991 and 1992. The greatest increases were recorded for driving while intoxicated (523%), malicious mischief (45%), and narcotics (30%).

While current data shows that serious crimes have been decreasing in Providence, public fear still runs high. To counteract the growing fear of crime, and to return the city to a more traditional level of service, an effort has been made by the city to increase the number of police officers on the streets. The number of police officers in Providence has been declining for several years, from a high of 440 between 1987 and 1991 to 418 in 1992, and to 410 in 1993, the lowest number of sworn officers in Providence since 1982. The move to increasing the number of police on the street has also been in response to a 1.3% increase in the number of calls for service between 1991 and 1993.

With increased police presence on the street, ongoing tension between public safety personnel and the city's minority and immigrant residents is the greatest challenge to developing effective policing and achieving our vision of a safe city. Public safety personnel do not reflect the ethnic mix of the city and the percentage of women in public safety positions is also significantly lower than the population as a whole. In addition to these numbers, Providence's considerable non-native and multi-cultural population face distinct barriers in dealing with the public safety establishment. Reasons run from the most obvious, like language barriers and discrimination, to the more subtle, such as a fear of authority figures by many immigrant populations.

To counter poor police/community relations, increase feelings of safety and curtail the rise in criminal disorder, the city launched a community policing program in 1991. The city wanted the police to work more closely with neighborhood residents and recognized the need for a racially representative community police force. The Community Policing Bureau advocates a problem solving approach to crime fighting. Instead of simply responding to service calls and apprehending criminals, they work closely with residents to prevent crime and to determine patterns of crime.

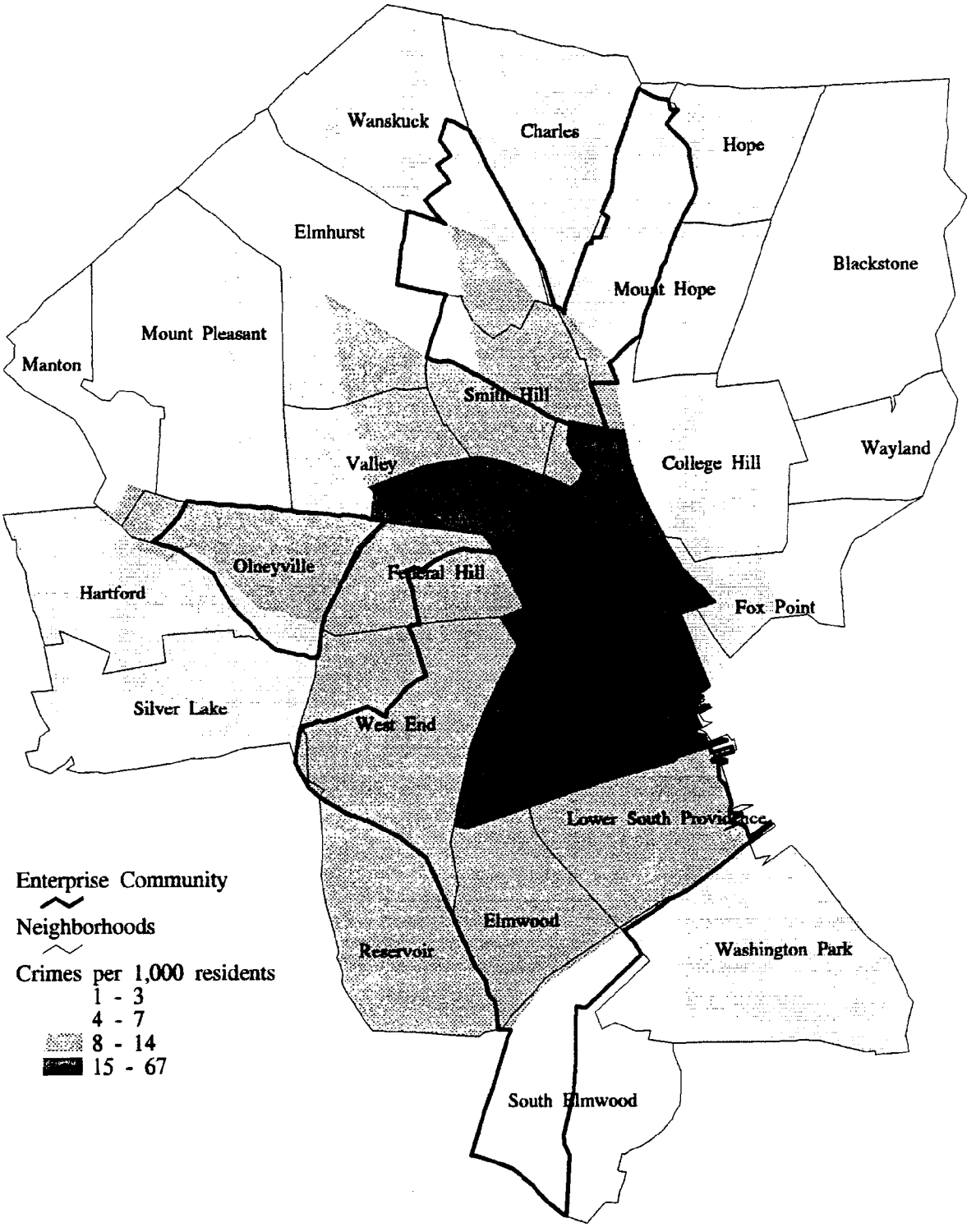
This program now deploys 34 sworn officers in 18 storefront locations throughout the city. One in five community police officers is a minority, including four African Americans (12%), two Hispanics (6%), and one Asian (3%). In addition, three women members constitute 9% of the community police force. All of these proportions are higher than those reported for the rest of the department. Earlier this year, Providence received word from the federal Bureau of Justice Administration that it had received a grant under the bureau's Police Hiring Supplement Program that would allow the city to hire 14 additional community police officers. In addition, the city has committed to hiring additional officers, reassigning officers to the street from desk jobs and filling desk jobs with civilian clerks.

According to Providence Fire Department records, there were 461 structure fires in Providence in 1992. Of these, 331 (72%) were determined to be incendiary and 130 (28%) were deemed accidental. An Anti-Arson task force was created in 1979 by SWAP (Stop Wasting Abandoned Property) to help coordinate the city's efforts to educate people about arson prevention and fire safety, as well as reducing the risk of arson and destruction of life and property.

Demographic Characteristics
Providence Police and Fire Departments, Community Policing Bureau and City of Providence

	Total	*White*	*Black*	*Latino*	*Asian*	*American Indian*
I. Providence Police Dept.						
Number of patrol officers						
Men	384	335	26	14	8	1
Women	26	21	4	1	0	0
Total	410	356	30	15	8	1
Percent of patrol officers						
Men	93.7	81.7	6.3	3.4	0.0	0.0
Women	6.3	5.1	1.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	86.8	7.3	3.7	2.0	0.2
II. Fire and Rescue Dept.						
Number of officers						
Men	112	109	3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Women	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	112	109	3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Percent of officers						
Men	100.0	97.3	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Women	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	97.3	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
III. Community Policing Bureau						
Number of patrol officers						
Men	31	24	4	2	1	0
Women	3	3	0	0	0	0
Total	34	27	4	2	1	0
Percent of patrol officers						
Men	91.2	70.6	11.8	5.9	2.9	0.0
Women	8.8	8.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	79.4	11.8	5.9	2.9	0.0
III. City of Providence						
Number of residents						
Male	76,439	48,690	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Female	84,289	55,008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	160,728	103,698	20,259	24,982	9,051	1,226
Percent of residents						
Male	47.6	47.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Female	52.4	53.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	100.0	64.5	12.6	15.5	5.6	0.8

Map 13-1
Violent Crimes per 1,000 Residents, 1992
Providence Police Car Posts



Voices from the Community

The Public Safety Task Force most often discussed issues surrounding Providence's ethnically diverse communities. Two recurring themes dealt with developing multi-cultural awareness and sensitivity training for public safety personnel and increasing minority representation in police, fire and rescue that would accurately reflect the city's demographic makeup.

Improved communications was another thread running throughout task force discussions, primarily, the need for multi-lingual public safety personnel, and improved communication and collaboration between public safety personnel and the public.

Staffing issues were a concern with increasing the number of public safety personnel "on the street" a major area of discussion. The task force also acknowledged that in order to increase personnel, there must be means for funding them .

Arson prevention activities also played into task force discussions. The group cited increased education about and prevention efforts for arson as important.

"Providence's diversity should be a positive contribution to society if all try to learn about each other's cultures."

— Poster session participant

"I would like to see every neighborhood in the city unite together as one in order to make our streets safer and the quality of life better."

— Providence Patrolman

"I would like to see people be able to live in harmony and unity, and also have more respect for the community and the people living in it. People should take more pride in their surroundings."

— A task force participant

"There are a lot of bad people in the neighborhoods. You see metal bats. You see stabbings. They set a lot of fires. Once I saw the police arrest five vans full of people. I don't get scared -- kids are smart these days. Living here makes you grow up fast."

— A 12-year-old boy

Strategies

1. ***Improve communication through policy and community collaboration.*** Communication is key in the life and death situations which public safety personnel face every day. A collaborative effort to improve and nurture communication must be an integral part of the plan to enhance public safety services, not only for emergencies, but for overall quality of life issues that fall within the public safety arena. Improved communication requires a commitment for all involved. Public safety personnel need to perform better outreach and education, so that the public better understands their role and their work. They must also develop a true empathy for the people they serve. In turn, the public must work cooperatively with police and fire to inform these departments as to specific community needs, concerns and fears, as well as work cooperatively to help address such problems as arson.

   ### Next Steps

   - Continue to expand community policing. Community police officers establish at a fundamental level the link between police and residents upon which better communication is built. The Police Department must ensure regular and reliable community police storefronts in all areas of the city.
   - Institute community education programs on crime and the role of public safety officers. The police and fire departments, in collaboration with school, community centers and other neighborhood groups should develop programs that educate the public as to the work and function of each public safety department.
   - Implement public information programs to disseminate information on public safety to residents. A newsletter about public safety issues, concerns, updates, trends or other important information should be produced and distributed by the police department on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. In addition, the Providence Journal Bulletin, community newspapers and television stations should exercise greater responsibility in their reporting and make an ongoing commitment to working with the city and its residents to promote safety and trust.
   - Organize town or neighborhood forums on crime issues. At such meetings in individual neighborhoods around the city, sponsoring groups would invite judges, bar associations, ranking public safety officers, social service organizations, community leaders, etc. to speak to the issue of public safety. Public, face-to-face discussion of concerns about crime and fire is the first step in developing accountability, on the part of public safety officers to the neighborhood and residents the police and fire departments.

2. ***Address the needs of Providence's diverse, multi-cultural population.*** The ethnic and racial makeup of the city requires linguistic and cultural awareness by public safety officers. An understanding of the many languages spoken by the city's residents can be a decisive factor in life and death situations. Understanding the cultural fears, beliefs, and traditions held by the many communities living in Providence is key to true communication which builds long-term relationships and fosters positive community growth.

Next Steps

- Institute in-service training programs on cultural awareness, sensitivity, and language for all officers. These programs should be developed and implemented in conjunction with the populations being served. With regard to language, officers must be available at all times of the day to handle problems in all the major languages spoken in the city. This should include multi-lingual dispatchers.
- Hire public safety officers in accordance with the demographic makeup of the city. As of 1993, all new city employees must reside in the city within six months of being hired. The clearest signal of fairness and concern the Police and Fire Departments can make to the city's minorities is to train and hire officers that represent the different populations of the city. Persons of color must be accepted to public safety careers without discrimination and be promoted according to performance without regard to political or union influence.
- Promote the city's Public Service Academy. Careers in public safety are rewarding and must be promoted as such. The Public Service Academy should work closely with the Police and Fire Departments and residents to cultivate public safety personnel from within.

3. ***Develop comprehensive city-wide crime and fire prevention strategies as a priority in addressing these issues.*** The "knee-jerk" reaction to increasing crime and arson rates is often to increase the number of police and fire personnel. Although sufficient fire and crime protection requires adequate staffing, a strategy to address the root causes of these issues must also be in place.

Next Steps

- Train community-based "crime prevention teams" for community residents to be pro-active on crime. Police and fire officers should adopt a long-term strategy of prevention which embraces the community as an active partner public safety efforts. Residents know their neighborhoods best and should work with police and fire officials to prevent problems before they occur.
- Establish close ties between community police storefronts and local schools, especially with COZs. As schools evolve into broadly defined child opportunity zones, child and family safety must be a priority. Positive interaction between children and police at an early age will provide the basis of amicable community/police relations in the future.
- Establish a comprehensive network of Crime Watches and Neighborhood Improvement Groups. Many community organizations have formed to work in concert with the police to reduce crime and disorder. Crime watches have residents be the "eyes" of the police department. They serve as a deterrent to criminal activity through their visible presence and by calling the police on suspected criminals. Neighborhood improvement associations also work to reduce disorder by focusing on areas in the neighborhood that lead to blight and disorder.

4. ***Improve communication the Police and Fire Departments and other city agencies and departments.*** Crime rarely happens in isolation. Formal and informal partnerships between public safety departments, social services agencies and City Hall should be established to identify and address issues of recurring crime.

Next Steps

- Coordinate communication between neighborhood residents, the Police and Fire Departments, the Tax Assessor's office, Code Enforcement, and Housing Court to address the problem of vacant and abandoned housing and crime. Abandoned buildings are a breeding ground for drug related crime and arson. Vigilant code enforcement for buildings susceptible to crime can stop problems early and permanently.
- Computerize arson fire tracking. A coordinated and efficient effort at tracking arson between the Fire Department and Code Enforcement and building owners can be an effective and proactive tool against arson.

Assets/Opportunities

Gun Court. Initiated by Mayor Cianci to reduce the number of gun-related crimes, this plan calls for the creation of a gun court to handle a limited number of gun-related crimes. The cases would have to come to trial within 60 days of discovery. Suspension of sentences would be prohibited and continuances would be discouraged. The reduced caseload of the court would allow defendants to go to trial instead of plea bargaining to a lesser charge. It is hoped that swifter trials and harsher sentences will serve as an effective deterrent.

Providence Anti-Arson Coalition. A coalition of individuals, neighborhood associations and city officials working collaboratively to prevent arson. The Coalition provides community education, about fire safety and arson prevention. Code Enforcement receives reports about properties that are fire hazards and in turn notifies property owners of violations that put them at risk for an accidental fire. The Recorder of Deeds and the Tax Assessor serve as resources to find out the status and owners of a property because abandoned, heavily mortgaged property is at high risk for arson. All suspected cases of arson to the police, fire department or insurers, who then handle things accordingly.

Police's Youth Services Bureau and Fire Juvenile Units and their relationship to the schools, i.e. the work that these units do to improve relations between public safety personnel and youth and to foster respect. Examples include the DARE Program, Camp Phoenix, and the "Better Things to Do" program.

The Anti-Graffiti Network. Last May, Mayor Cianci created the Anti-Graffiti Network. One goal of the network is to serve as an remove graffiti and investigate and apprehend the vandals. To that end, a graffiti hotline has been installed. Reports of graffiti are dispatched to work crews who paint over or remove it. The other goals of the network is re-direct the energy of the youth who are vandalizing. "Students Off the Street" and youth summer programs have been implemented in order to reach that goal.

Diversity and the Providence Police and Fire Departments

Providence is a city with a rapidly changing demography. In the past ten years, it has experienced one of the largest rates of increase in Southeast Asians and Latinos of any U.S. city. Between 1980 and 1990 the city's Hispanic and Asian population have expanded dramatically. During this period, the Hispanic population increased by nearly 175%. Currently about 36% of the population is a racial or ethnic minority.

The Providence Police and Fire Departments have had difficulty keeping up with that change. Whites constitute 64.5% of the city, but 81.7% of the police department and 97.3% of the fire department (see table above). The single largest minority group within the city is Latino, at 15.5% of the population, yet they are only 2.9% of the public safety workforce. Blacks, Asians, and American Indians are also underrepresented, with each group's proportion of the police force less than half of their proportion of the city's population. Minority representation among higher ranking officers on the police force is virtually non-existent. Blacks are the only minority group represented in the fire department, yet they comprise less than 3% of the total force.

Women are also underrepresented in the police and fire departments. Although females constitute 52.4% of the population of Providence, they only make up 6.3% of the police department and 0.0% of the fire department. Of the 26 women police officers who are employed, 21 are White, and none are Asian or American Indian.

The Community Policing Bureau has a somewhat better record since its goal is to have "a community police force which reflects the ethnicity of the neighborhoods served." African-American representation is almost proportional to that in the larger population, however there is still a disparity for Hispanics and Asians. Women make up 8.8% of the community police force, still not proportional, but a marked improvement nonetheless. Recently Providence received a grant from the Department of Justice to increase the numbers of Community Police. For these new positions, priority will be given to candidates who are women, or who are Asian, African-American, or Latino.

The rising number of African-American, Latino, and Asian residents of Providence necessitates the addition of members of these ethnicities to the Providence police force. In the case of the latter two groups, some members are recent immigrants and require police who have not only cultural sensitivity, but also language skills. Women are also necessary to serve as role model, to deal with the increasing number of female perpetrators and to provide a more sensitive handling of domestic abuse and sexual assault cases.

In an effort to increase the number of minority public safety personnel, the city of Providence has taken a number of steps. One is the creation of the Public Service Academy at Central High School by Mayor Cianci. He led the way for the establishment of the academy so that Providence can "grow our own police and fire people." Central's student body is largely minority, and it is expected that the PSA will reflect the demographics of the school to grant opportunities to those who have been traditionally excluded from professional public service activities. ■

Community Policing

Sponsoring a Halloween party for 300 children... Inviting residents to join in a neighborhood trash or graffiti clean-up... Petitioning the City Council to have high traffic streets near a school made one-way... Establishing a neighborhood study group for children ...Working with a business owner to prevent vagrancy in front of his store... These accomplishments sound like the tasks of a community organizer or a helpful neighbor, instead they are part of the duties of a Providence community police officer.

The Community Policing Program was established in Providence in 1991 and currently operates with 34 police officers at 18 storefront offices across Providence. The purpose of the program is to increase communication between police officers and neighborhood residents, to reduce crime and the fear of crime in these areas, and to have police officers work with community members to develop innovative solutions to the problems of crime and disorder. Additionally, in many instances community police officers serve as a liaison between other government agencies and residents. They tackle issues both directly and indirectly related to public safety which will motivate community involvement and spur reinvestment.

Community policing is a new way of law enforcement, or rather a return to older, community-based law enforcement practices. The concept is simple: The police officers are part of the community; there to both protect and serve its residents. Officers are assigned to a certain beat which they patrol on foot or on bicycles. During that time they talk with community residents to discover their concerns and work to alleviate them.

Yet these "Officer Friendly's" do more than just walk through the neighborhood chatting. More than just preventing crime, they also apprehend criminals. In some cases they are able to work more effectively because of their increased mobility and knowledge of the community, its high-crime areas and its repeat offenders.

Both its potential and its successes have sparked notice from the public and private sector who have in turn mobilized to help in the crime-fighting process. The storefronts substations have been financed or subsidized by private citizens. Recently The Providence Plan, the Providence Police Department, Brown University, the Community College of Rhode Island, Fleet Bank, and a consortium of insurance companies worked together to donate technical assistance, computer training, and approximately $70,000 to equip the storefronts with personal computers, printers and fax/modems.

Mayor Vincent A. Cianci Jr. and Chief of Police Col. Bernard Gannon both vocalized their support of this modernization, finding it an effective step towards an efficient policing system. The equipment will save community police valuable time by providing computerized mapping of crime activity, a readily-retrievable reporting system, as well as allowing speedy communication with the central office downtown and access to the state's criminal justice information system network.

The technical upgrade of the community policing system is not all in store for its future. A recently awarded Department of Justice grant will allow the addition of 14 community officers to the group, bringing the total Providence force to 453. The Police Department also plans to expand community policing to serve more areas and further integrate community policing practices with its whole force. All of this public and private investment shows that local sources have the dedication and willingness necessary to help create the vision of a safe Providence. ■

Neighborhood Crime Watches

During the seventies and eighties, most Providence neighborhoods had strong neighborhood associations. These associations frequently started crime watches groups to patrol the areas or just certain streets. Crime watches in Providence were so widespread that there was a citywide organization of all the different crime watches.

When the drug trade began to hit Providence in the late eighties, the crime watch groups began to respond. Some groups purchased walkie-talkies or portable phones and patrolled their areas nightly, reported suspected drug trade. Other neighborhoods adopted the high visibility approach as a deterrent to buyers. They confronted drug buyers and took down license plates. This approach often also worked against prostitution. The police department worked in conjunction with these groups by setting up hotlines to channel their calls.

Now in the 90s, neighborhood policing has been given a boost by the addition of community police. One of the goals of the community police is to work with the residents to help solve the problems of the area.

Residents now have many avenues to help "police themselves." One way is through the police reserve program, which trains citizens to help the police in crime prevention. At present there are 60 sworn volunteer reserve officers who police Public Housing property and elderly complexes in the city in conjunction with a community policing unit. The Youth Crime watch is an effort to have students create their own programs to prevent crime, drug abuse and dropouts. The community police have been instrumental in mobilizing residents, organizing new community crime watches and working with existing ones. ■

The Anti-Graffiti Program

The City of Providence has been working to eliminate graffiti, a problem common in most urban areas. Last November, after months of collaborating with city department directors and community leaders, Mayor Cianci created the Anti-Graffiti Network

One component of the Network's focus is reactive: removing graffiti and apprehending the perpetrators. The Network also installed a graffiti hot line. Anti-graffiti work crews are then dispatched to the site and the graffiti is painted over or removed. Since October, the Network has yielded 55 arrests and over 6,000 graffiti "tags" have been removed from highway walls, school buildings, residential and commercial properties.

The other component is pro-active: redirecting the energy of youth who are vandalizing and preventing them from doing it again. Plans are now underway to implement a summer youth program. The Providence Police "Students Off the Streets" program has contacted over 300 graffiti writers, some of whom have come forward and signed amnesty pledges as part of an agreement to stop vandalizing.

Work has begun on the first of twenty murals, a 1,600 square foot painting of an ancient Roman Bridge. Four ex-graffiti artist will assist the painter. Of the $15,000 cost for the mural project, $2,000 will be city funds and the rest private contributions. About 50% of the funding has been raised by Shawmut Bank, Rhode Island Monthly Magazine, Ticketron, CVS and the Federal Hill Businessman's Association.

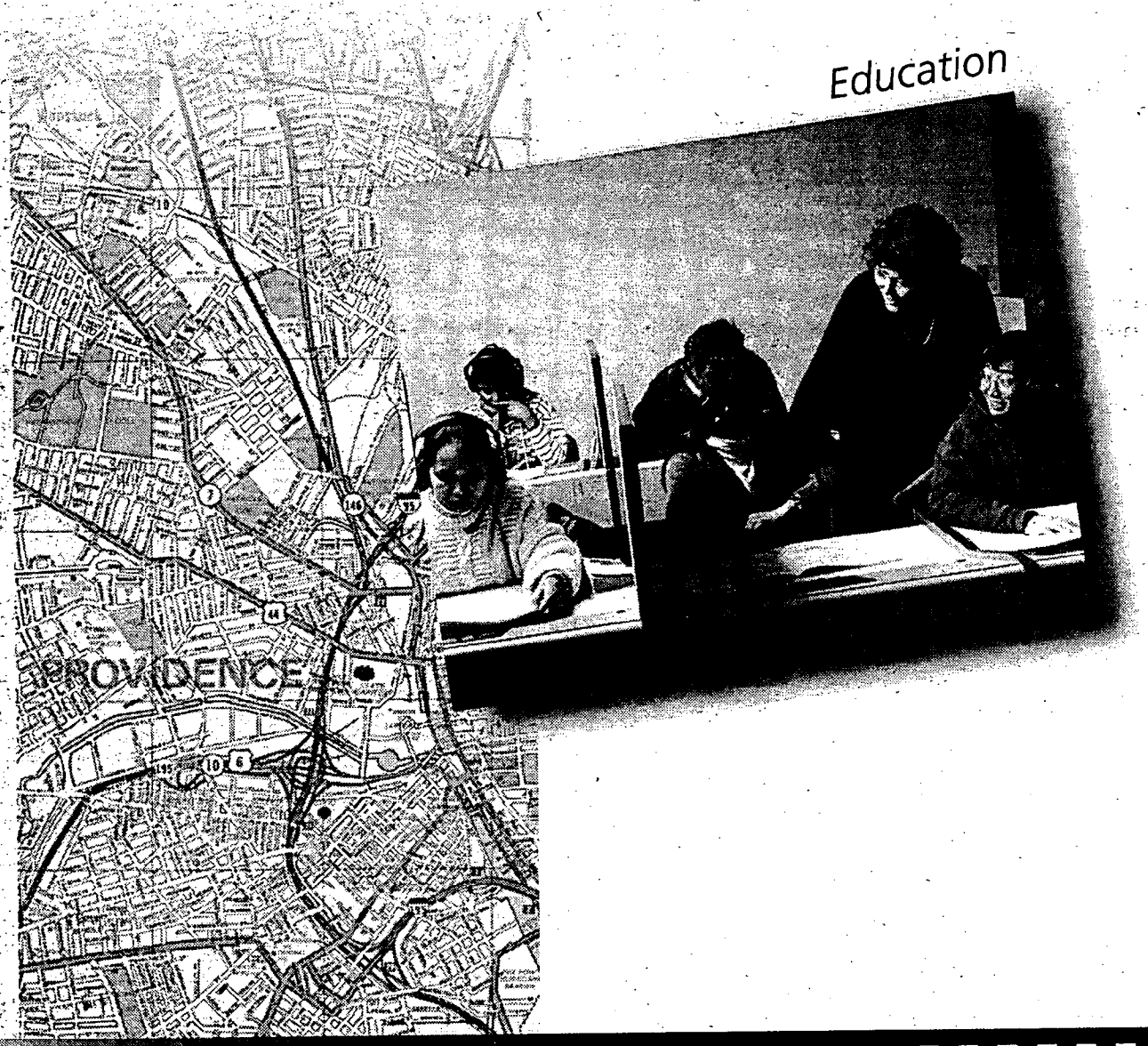
The broad based community support and collaborative efforts among city agencies has enabled the Mayor's Anti-Graffiti Network to make formidable strides toward solving this urban problem. ■

Part III

The Strategic Plan

Investing in People

Education



Chapter 14
Education

Vision Statement

Providence schools are the most important institutions shaping our city's future. The education our children receive will provide them the life, job, and intellectual skills necessary for success in the 21st century. Through challenging, innovative and culturally competent curricula and activities, students will develop the life and job skills to be happy, responsible, and productive members of a democratic society.

Schools will play an active role in addressing the comprehensive needs of the city's children. Schools will work closely with businesses and the community to provide the job training and develop a job network to facilitate school-to-work transition. By surrounding schools with Child Opportunity Zones, students and their families will have ready access to the social and health services children need to make the most of their education.

Schools will become vital and dynamic community institutions. District-wide site-based management will allow schools the flexibility to address creatively the needs of their community. Teachers, administrators, parents, students and the community will work together in each school and system-wide to address aggressively the challenges the youth of Providence face today and will face in the future.

Context

While many cities and states talk about education reform, Providence and the state of Rhode Island have made rapid progress towards a unified vision of excellence in education. This vision has come from different groups and interests with the same messages.

In 1993, the Providence Blueprint for Education, known as the *PROBE Commission*, presented an independent, community-wide assessment of the Providence Public Schools. The PROBE report was a watershed in the history of the Providence Public Schools in terms of the comprehensiveness and candor of its recommendations. During 18 months of research guided by the 33-member commission, PROBE interviewed and surveyed over 2,000 people, conducted more than two dozen focus groups of parents, teachers, students and administrators, and interviewed eight School Board members, the mayor and the Teachers' Union president. Since the publication of the commission's 39 recommendations, the city, School Department, the Providence Teacher's Union and the PROBE Commission have been working to make this vision of Providence's schools a reality.

Concurrent with the PROBE commission investigation, the Governor convened the *21st Century Education Commission* to investigate the state of public schools in Rhode Island. The report that the 21st Century Education Commission published in 1992 comprehensively addresses the financial, social and structural issues confronting education in Rhode Island. The major themes of the report included equitable needs-based school financing, site-based management for all schools, improved teacher training, and integrated education, health and social services. In January, 1994, the state Department of Education introduced legislation to enact specific reforms based on the commission's report.

System Profile

The Providence Public Schools, the largest system in the state, serves a student population with many needs. Great ethnic and racial diversity, coupled with high rates of limited English proficiency and student transience, pose significant educational challenges. During the past decade, the size and composition of the public school population has changed dramatically. The total student population has increased from 18,016 in 1982 to 21,852 in 1993, an increase of 21 percent. In 1993, one in three Providence students was Hispanic, one in four was black, 12 percent were Asian, and about 1 percent were Native American. By contrast, in 1982, more than half of all public school students were white (54%), 25 percent were black, 12 percent Hispanic, and 8 percent Asian. According to the PROBE report, Providence has one of the most diverse student populations of any city in the United States. It was the only medium-sized city examined by PROBE that had at least 10 percent of its student population from one of four different racial/ethnic groups: Asian, black, Hispanic, and white. The Providence School Department also reports that there are more than 80 different languages spoken in the homes of Providence public school students.

Nearly thirty percent of children in Providence schools come from families living below the poverty level — almost eighteen percent above the state average. Nearly two-thirds of Providence students receive free or reduced-price lunches because they come from low income families. Yet, on average, Providence spends nearly $1,000 less per pupil than comparable districts in the Northeast.

Comparison of Rhode Island and Providence School System Characteristics, 1992

(in percent)

Characteristics	*Providence*	*Rhode Island*	*difference*
Students in private schools	19	14	-5
Students in public schools	81	86	-5
Minority students	67	17	+50
Special education students	14.9	14	+.9
Limited English proficiency	18.6	5	+13.6
Compensatory education students	26.3	21	+5.3
Gifted/talented students	2.9	4	-1.1
Free/reduced price lunch students	61	24	+37
Graduation rate	68.2	82.6	-14.4
Dropout rate	9.3	4.7	+4.6
Attendance rate	87.9	93.2	-5.5
Children in poverty (families with children 0-17 years old)	29.2	11.6	+17.6

Providence Public School Population by Race, 1993-1994

	American Indian	*Asian/Pacific Islander*	*Black*	*Hispanic*	*White*	*Total*
Number	168	1530	5505	7909	6720	22832
Percent	0.74	11.08	24.11	34.64	29.11	100

Budget, 1994-1995 School Year

- $151 million total (not including federal grants)

  State share 61%

  City share 39%

- $6,300 expenditure per pupil
- $18 million in federal money for special education, vocational education, limited English proficiency and low-income supplement
- This year's state allocation includes a $19 million "poverty" allocation, granted in compliance with a court mandated reallocation of state education money

Student Outcomes

- The acceptance rate at two- or four-year colleges was 64% for Providence's 1992 high school graduates.
- College intention rates vary by school. At Classical, 93% of the graduates plan to go to college, while the rate is 73% at Hope, 61% at Central, 46% at the ALP and 30% for Mt. Pleasant graduates.

Facilities

Providence has 38 school buildings including 24 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, 5 high schools, 3 vocational/occupational schools and one administration building.

Limited English Proficiency

In 1993-1994, the Limited English Proficient student population was 4,035, or 18 percent of the total school enrollment. Of these students, 60 percent were Spanish speaking.

Parental Involvement

There is a parent/teachers organization at every school. Citywide, the voice of parents is heard through the Chapter One Parents Advisory Board, the citywide supervisory education council, the Superintendent's Hispanic Parent Advisory Council and the Providence Parents for Public Schools. Additionally, four target schools are developing a comprehensive Parents' Agenda in conjunction with the McCormick Institute at the University of Massachusetts.

School-to-Work/Vocational Education

The School-to-work Transition Program operates at three comprehensive high schools providing a total a 150 students with an advisor, a part-time job and ultimately an on-the-job mentor. In September, 1994, there will be a new high school, and the program will be expanded to include 300 students.

Magnet Programs

Environmental Science Magnet	Sackett Street Elementary
International Studies/Language Magnet	Gilbert Stuart Elementary
Computer Technology/ Multi-Media Magnet	Mary Fogarty Elementary
Discovery Magnet for Eco-Literacy	Asa Messer Elementary
Science, Visual/Performing Arts Magnet	Roger Williams Middle School
Liberal Arts/Extended Day Magnet	Samuel Bridgham Middle School
Health Science/Teacher Magnet	Mt. Pleasant High School
Business, Law and Government Magnet	Central High School
Arts and Communication/Essential Schools	Hope High School

Voices from the Community

Nine out of 12 community task forces designated education as the most important attribute for a livable city.

The Community Task Force on Education unanimously supports the vision and recommendations of the PROBE Commission. They urge that stakeholders implement all of the reforms suggested in the report and are disturbed that more progress has not been made to date.

The Education Task Force also endorses the goals of the 21st Century Report and current Guaranteed Student Entitlement (GSE) legislation. The connection of the PROBE recommendations to statewide student learning goals was seen as essential for accountability at the local level.

Concern was raised by task force members that federal integration mandates often stifle effective educational strategies by severing the connection between the school and its local community. Racial segregation still exists in Providence and schools can and should play a role in solving that problem. Busing, however, can prevent the establishment of true community schools, which many felt was a desirable goal.

"We should all take teaching and learning more seriously."

— Hope High School student

"[I like best] the diversity of the students. I think we learn from each other rather than in the classroom to an extent. The knowledge we get from each other helps make the learning easier and you get more out of it."

— Central High School student

"It's so difficult for single parents. There's nothing in the school system for families who are going through trauma. . . We know resources are out there, but we don't know how to get them. We just take one day at a time, and we scrape by."

— Divorced, working mother of three

"I wish there would be less lecturing. The teachers don't really believe in letting us think for ourselves. They focus on having us memorize their ideas. We need more independent projects."

— Classical High School student

"[We need] full day meetings for staff development, school business. Perhaps the school days for teachers should be increased."

— A middle school teacher

Strategies

1. ***Implement all reform initiatives that have been proposed at the city and state level.*** The momentum and excitement generated by PROBE and the 21st Century Report should be followed by action.

Next Steps

- Continue implementation of PROBE reforms. The community stands strongly behind the recommendations of the PROBE Commission and urges the administrators, teachers, support staff and all stakeholders in the educational system to place the need of children above all else to complete the reforms as soon as possible.
- Press for statewide adoption of the 21st Century Education Commission goals for state education reform. Providence stands to benefit immensely from the new direction in the state's education policy, specifically through increased state funding and endorsement and support for the city's existing reform agenda. Quality education for all children in the city can only be founded upon equitable funding, integrated social services, site-based management, expanded professional development, and statewide learning goals.
- Demand public commitments by all stakeholders on a document that lays out an action plan to implement existing reform proposals. Although a plan for reform exists and progress is being made upon it, all stakeholders in school reform should publicly commit to making the implementation of these reforms a priority and to a timeline for implementation. These commitments should come from the School Department, unions and parents.

2. ***Address the life-long educational needs of all residents.*** Providence must make a commitment to provide lifelong learning for all members of the community. Our immigrant population, children and adults alike, require language training. Unemployed adults and youths not in school must have access to workforce and job skills training.

Next Steps

- Connect schools to businesses and the job network to improve the quality and appropriateness of workforce skill training and facilitate the school-to-work transition. Businesses should work with schools to develop and implement curricula that addresses the workforce needs of the 21st century.
- Broaden the number of people in the classroom educating children, like professionals, artists etc. The community has much to offer educationally to students. Schools must take the initiative to invite people into the classroom to share their knowledge and develop the personal connections between adults and students as role models, mentors and friends.

3. ***Integrate health, education and social services into the schools for children and their families.*** Children must come to school ready and able to learn. Easy access to social services through the school can improve student readiness and utilization of necessary services.

Next Steps

- Expand the Child Opportunity Zone concept so that all areas of the city are covered by a family and child support and referral network. Child Opportunity Zones strive to coordinate relevant educational, social and health resources to meet all the needs of the child and family. Schools cannot educate effectively if they exist in a vacuum. They must be aggressive in their outreach to the community and parents.
- Require pre- and in-service training for teachers to deal with social services in the school. The expanded notion of the school as Child Opportunity Zone and the increasing complexity of the issues faced by students in the system is a significant challenge to our teachers. Through training, teachers will learn how to address the social needs of children in the classroom and how to work with social service professionals in providing a complete, supportive social and educational environment in the school.
- Provide day care and transportation for parents so they can attend the school during the day and after hours. Schools must be aggressive in their outreach to parents and families and pay special attention to the real and psychological barriers which keep these groups out of the school.

4. ***Improve communication among stakeholders on all aspects of the education system, from the various ongoing reform efforts to activities at individual schools.*** This collaboration requires communication and access to information; students, parents, administrators, the school board and the community at large all need to be informed and have access to one another. Information about schools and the system should be available in multiple languages and be aware of other cultural issues.

Next Steps

- Establish a uniform information system for the entire school system which is accessible to parents and the community. This information should be used to publish regular school report cards that report on student achievement and comprehensive school improvement.
- Improve communication between the school system, parents and the community with a system-wide, multilingual newsletter. Individual schools should also be aggressive in their outreach through individual school newsletters, "voicemail" systems with messages in different languages to disseminate information and improve parent/teacher communication, and school videos to promote the activities of schools to parents and citywide.
- Publish information about various schools and how to get involved in local newspapers
- Televise school board meetings to publicize its efforts more effectively and to improve communication among stakeholders.

5. ***Develop strong "school communities" in each school.*** Two important themes in current reform efforts must be reconciled with the realities of the school's relationship to its community. The 21st Century Report envisions an expanded notion of the school, one in which students and their families have access to a wide array of necessary health, education and social services. The neighborhood school, however, is not necessarily the school of the neighborhood's children. Schools must strive to develop a strong, vibrant and inclusive "school community" which encourages and promotes parental

involvement, wherever parents live in relation to the school. Schools must also make a special effort to reach out to the community in which they are located.

Next Steps

- School busing and public transportation must accommodate the needs of students and families that want to participate in after school programs. This entails extended busing in the afternoons, evenings and on weekends.
- Decentralize decision-making by encouraging site-based management. This should be complimented by broadening the governing voice in school to include teachers, parents, students and community members.
- Extend the school day and year. First, students must spend more time in the classroom. It is universally recognized that our students will not be able to compete in a global economy by spending only 180 days in school each year. The length of the school day and school year should be expanded. In addition, the role that the community expects schools and teachers to play will require professional training and expanded school services. Teacher training should not infringe upon the amount of time spent by the child learning in the classroom.
- Implement cultural sensitivity training for teachers and administrators so that they are prepared to deal with the increasing numbers of parents and local residents who will be using school facilities and services.
- Use computer technology to rationalize and minimize the need for busing. Every effort should be made to keep students, especially younger students, in schools close to their homes. Schools are the catalytic hub of the neighborhood. The important connection between the school and the community can be enhanced if the neighborhood's children attend the neighborhood's school.
- Develop schools as community centers. Schools are an invaluable physical and psychological community resource. As stressed in the Child Opportunity Zone initiative, they serve a hub for community resources. In addition, classrooms, auditoriums and playing fields can provide the facilities for recreational activities, extended education and community meetings.

Assets and Opportunities

PROBE Commission. School reform is well underway in Providence. A widely inclusive, community evaluation has determined a vision and recommendations which have been almost universally accepted throughout the city. PROBE and the Public Education Fund continue to work with the School Department, the Teacher's Union and the School Board to implement these changes. To keep the fires burning, the PROBE commission continues to work in close cooperation with the school department to advance its recommendations. In addition, the Mayor's Working Group on PROBE, composed of business and community leaders, state and city educators, and parents meets bi-weekly.

Child Opportunity Zones. The Department of Education in conjunction with the Departments of Health and Substance Abuse, the United Way of Southeastern New England and the Rhode Island Foundation are advancing the Child Opportunity Zone concept to address the comprehensive needs of students and their families by providing access and referral to integrate health, education and social services. This initiative is unlike anything undertaken at the state level in the past because it places planning and governance responsibilities with schools and their communities. Child Opportunity Zones are not intended to duplicate existing services. The nature and extent of services provided in or accessed through the school are determined by a community and parent-driven process. They will build upon and coordinate existing services and facilities and identifying gaps of unmet needs. Community-based COZ planning has been facilitated at the state level by technical and financial assistance. The William D'Abate school, well-known throughout the city for its innovative community school programs, has received the largest planning grant in the state and is currently expanding its program.

Newcomer School. The Providence School Department, in conjunction with the state Department of Education and the Education Alliance at Brown University, is currently planning a Newcomer School to ease the transition into the school system for foreign-born students. The school will offer a one-year transition program with an emphasis on developing language skills, building self-esteem, providing a comprehensive family needs assessment and referral, and facilitating the transition into the Providence community.

Independent Colleges and Hospitals Coalition for Health and Education Leadership for Providence Ten colleges and hospitals in Providence have recently announced an extensive plan to support the city's education reform movement. Through technical, in-kind and personnel assistance, the Coalition will contribute over $1.4 million over the next three years to develop and support programs from job training to art education to health care services. This summer, the colleges and universities are sponsoring a Summer Institute training program for parents, teachers and students. Participants will receive a fellowship to attend the two week program. Particularly relevant for COZs will be the implementation of a medical van, which will make routine stops at all of the city's schools to provide basic and preventive health care.

William D'Abate School Child Opportunity Zone

The Providence Public Schools, together with the Olneyville community — residents, parents, agencies and businesses — is building a model Child Opportunity Zone at the William D'Abate School to support community revitalization, families, and success for children in all realms.

During the last five years under the leadership of principal Mrs. Bernice Graser and the COZ teachers team, the school has created an on-site Family Center using funds from the federal

Even Start program. The Family Center provides adult education and English as a Second Language to parents, while children aged 3 - 5 are in a pre-school class. The parents and children also work together on special early learning projects. A full time nurse/teacher and full time social worker support child and family needs. In addition, a doctor from the local health center provides services at the school half-a-day per week. Special activities at the school for children include a band, orchestra, choruses, a juggling team, and a jumping-rope team.

To build upon D'Abate's ongoing success, the State Department of Education has awarded the school a planning grant to integrate its ongoing schoolwide project with new plans for expanded community involvement and integrated health, education and social services through the Child Opportunity Zone.

To months into the planning period, the COZ coordinator at D'Abate is developing neighborhood leadership groups to address the five greatest needs identified by the community:

- Family counseling and preventive medical health education (referral to existing health services, after hours access, preventive health workshops)
- Group counseling and support (alcoholism, domestic abuse)
- Recreation (youth and family swimming, after school and Saturday programs)
- Physical community revitalization (cleanups, neighborhood gardening)
- Community safety (working with the Olneyville community police storefront)

Parent/Resident Councils will work with a COZ Advisory Council comprised of representatives of agencies that provide social services in Olneyville to develop strong collaborative relationships. In the upcoming months, D'Abate will become an information and referral hub for the neighborhood and implement new service delivery patterns according to the suggestions of residents and parents.

The process initiated at the D'Abate school will in many respects serve as a model for subsequent COZs in the Providence school system. The school has been moving quickly towards fulfilling many recommendations outlined in the PROBE report, including school site management, cultural activities and programming, innovative curriculum and parent participation. D'Abate has also proven that the combination of integrated health, education and social services with site-based school management that develops and embraces parental and community involvement can make significant progress towards ensuring healthy children and families in our city. ■

Adult and Continuing Education

Dorcas Place Parent Literacy Center

Dorcas Place, designated "1993 Philanthropic Organization of the Year" by the Rhode Island Chapter of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives, serves approximately 400 students, the majority of whom are female single heads of household and are members of racial and ethnic minority groups. The encouragement and motivation instilled in Dorcas Place students are due to the abundance of services that the center provides.

Dorcas Place's adult literacy instruction program includes four components: a home-based tutoring program; "intermediate level" basic literacy instruction; an agency-based program for learning disabled students; and an inter-generational literacy program which works to help parents develop the skills and interest necessary to take an active role in their children's development. This organization also offers pre-GED/pre-vocational instruction, a parenting program, an independent living skills program, and a social services program which provides case management, counseling, and referrals.

Dorcas Place, in partnership with Salve Regina University in Newport, is one of Rhode Island's AmeriCorps grant nominees. The Collaborative for Community Service will provide Adult Basic Education for 30 low-income adults and encourage 15 participants to continue their schooling toward a degree or certificate at Salve Regina. AmeriCorps volunteers will work in teams of two (one from each institution) providing 10,800 hours of tutoring and mentorship per year aimed specifically at improving reading, writing, oral communication, and numeric skills.

The International Institute of Rhode Island

The International Institute, founded in 1921, offers approximately 8,000 immigrants and refugees programs to help them obtain citizenship, enroll their children in school, look for employment, and learn English. The Institute's presence in Providence has created strong ties with the area's ethnic communities, whose diversity was the original inspiration for this organization. Providing aid to individuals from over 95 nations, the International Institute hopes to facilitate the growth of the "pluralism that reflects America at its best." The programs it offers cover both social and educational services. In addition to legalization, resettlement and interpreting programs, the Institute provides services such as the Hispanic Early Intervention Program, which offers educational and recreational activities as well as parenting training. The Institute also finds employment for 90% of the adults who participate in its Vocational Training Program, as well as volunteer work for participants in the Summer Youth Employment Training Program. All of this

organization's programs are dedicated to the International Institute's fundamental goal: to facilitate immigrants' and refugees' integration into a complex American system. ■

Providence Public Schools Internal Reform

An internal reform process which predates the PROBE report has been underway in the Providence public schools since the summer of 1992. The school department is committed to learner-centered education driven by site-based accountability. To this end, seven key goals had been achieved by March, 1994:

- Exit outcomes were finalized and curriculum frameworks were developed so that schools can make more educational decisions on site.
- School improvement teams of teachers, staff, parents and the community function at each school.
- Priorities for improvement have been set at each school.
- School budgets are tied to priorities for school improvement.
- Two high schools will be breaking into smaller educational units or "houses", two middle schools and elementary schools are exploring similar arrangements.
- Some schools are developing a focus or theme.
- Six principals and assistant principals have been hired through a community driven process.

To facilitate reforms for the remainder of the decade the department has created a continuum of benchmark assessments for schools and a school self-evaluation audit process, assigned a resource coordinator to each school, and developed performance indicators that will be the basis of a reporting framework to monitor the progress of the school system. ■

Greater Providence Career and Technical School

In response to a 1990 report by the state Board of Regents and Workforce 2000, the Rhode Island Department of Education will be constructing a new vocational education center in South Providence to serve the needs of the greater Providence area. The Greater Providence Career and Technical School will be adjacent to the Providence campus of the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) and to the city's medical complex, which includes Rhode Island Hospital and Women and Infants Hospital. The school will serve approximately 800 students, both youth and adult, from the Greater Providence area.

The close connection with CCRI and the hospitals will make the school a natural magnet for those interested in medical careers and human services. There will also be a business and information technology career track. This framework will provide students with a base from which

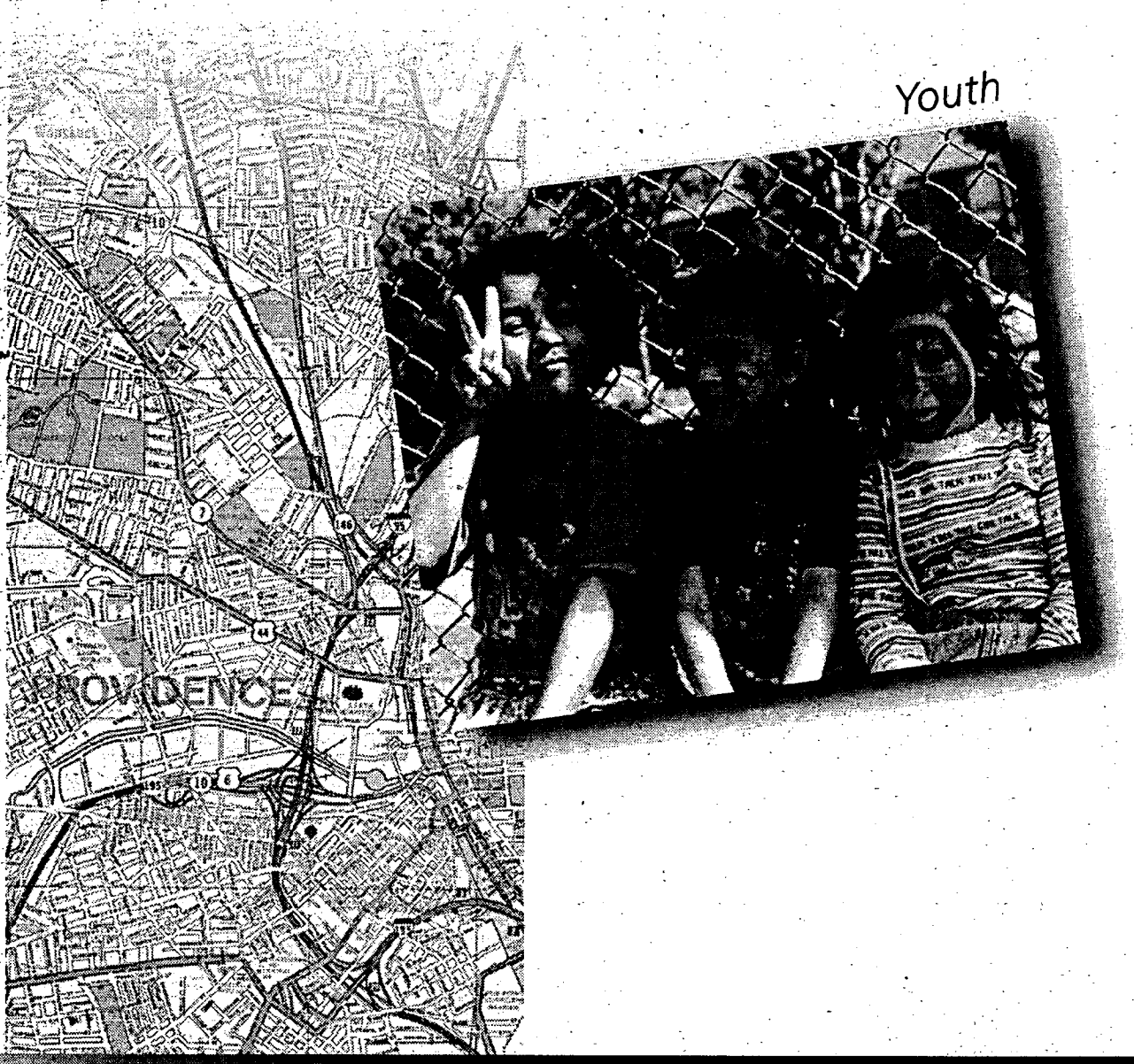
to design, with parental and teacher advice, their own personalized curriculum program by choosing among a series of modules. The length of each module will be determined by rate and style of each student's ability. All modules will be designed in collaboration with the CCRI's 2+2 Program to ensure admission into college upon graduation. They will use real-world applications of integrated subjects and skills to address problems of the specific career area chosen. Modules are part of a program design which encompasses community service, field work with professionals, support services, and team learning to show students the path to lifelong learning as citizen, worker, and learner. The Greater Providence Career and Technical School will be linked, therefore, to businesses, industry, parents, and the community, as well as to the elementary, community college, and higher education systems.

State Education Reform

Following the recommendations of the Governor's 21st Century Education Commission, the State Department of Education is moving ahead with a comprehensive reform agenda which strives to achieve excellence for all of Rhode Island's students. The reform effort has five prongs:

- Establish statewide learning goals and performance standards. The goal of education is to develop students who will function as involved and productive citizens. Specific outcomes should include critical thinking and problem solving, interpersonal skills, self-direction and self-reliance, broad knowledge and literacy, and citizenship skills.
- Decentralize decision-making power in schools. Every school should use shared decision-making power to empower staff, parents, and other members of the community.
- Integrate health, education and social services in the school. Children and their families have complex needs which often keep schools from focusing on their main objective - educating our children. Schools must adapt to these realities by providing access to comprehensive health, education and social services.
- Require ongoing professional development for all educators. Achieving excellence requires comprehensive and ongoing training and development for the professionals who serve our students.
- Develop an equitable, adequate, fair and effective financing system based on students' needs. The finance system must strive to make equal learner outcomes a reality and must be connected to demonstrated improvements in learning and teaching practices.

A recent state court ruling that declared the state's reliance on local property taxes to fund education inequitable and unconstitutional has reinforced the urgency of this agenda. The new funding formula will undoubtedly direct more money to Providence. In addition, all of the state reform proposals complement the agenda being advanced by the Providence Public Schools and PROBE, as well as the new federal Goals 2000 legislation. ■


Youth
PROVIDENCE
Smith Hill Center
ROGERS REC. BASKETBALL TEAM
THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT
RUSSELL BUTLE

Chapter 15
Youth

Vision Statement

Providence will become a community that is respectful and responsive to its diverse and growing youth population. Our youths are our most prized resource, and the city will develop an environment that encourages youth to participate and take ownership in the future of their communities. Agencies and institutions serving youths (schools, community centers, housing developments etc.) must develop sincere, cooperative relationships with young people, their families and residents by way of empowerment and support for all residents regardless of race or economic standing. This on-going relationship between residents and the community is necessary to create a supportive and safe environment for our children to live and thrive in.

Providence understands that a better future for our children demands a commitment to policies that will enhance the economic opportunities, productivity, and self esteem of the growing number of dependent and poverty stricken youth. We will nurture programs and activities that sincerely reflect the many cultures that make us unique. By doing so, we will empower our youth with the desire, awareness and personal skills necessary to support and understand each other and play a constructive and proactive role in their community.

Context

According to census data, the median age of the Providence population declined slightly between 1980 and 1990, dropping from 29.9 years to 29.4 years. The fastest growing age category over the past decade was persons under five years of age, which recorded a 27 percent increase. Persons between the ages of 5 and 14 increased by 4 percent, and those between the ages of 15 and 19 years declined by 10 percent during this same period.

Although one in four Providence residents is under the age of 18, the youth population in Providence is unevenly distributed across neighborhoods (see map 15-1), ranging from a low of 10 percent of all residents in the Wayland neighborhood to more than 40 percent in Lower South Providence and Smith Hill. With the exception of Federal Hill, all of the areas included in the city's Enterprise Community have youth populations substantially higher than the citywide average. Conversely, the city's north and east side neighborhoods have youth populations significantly lower than the citywide average.

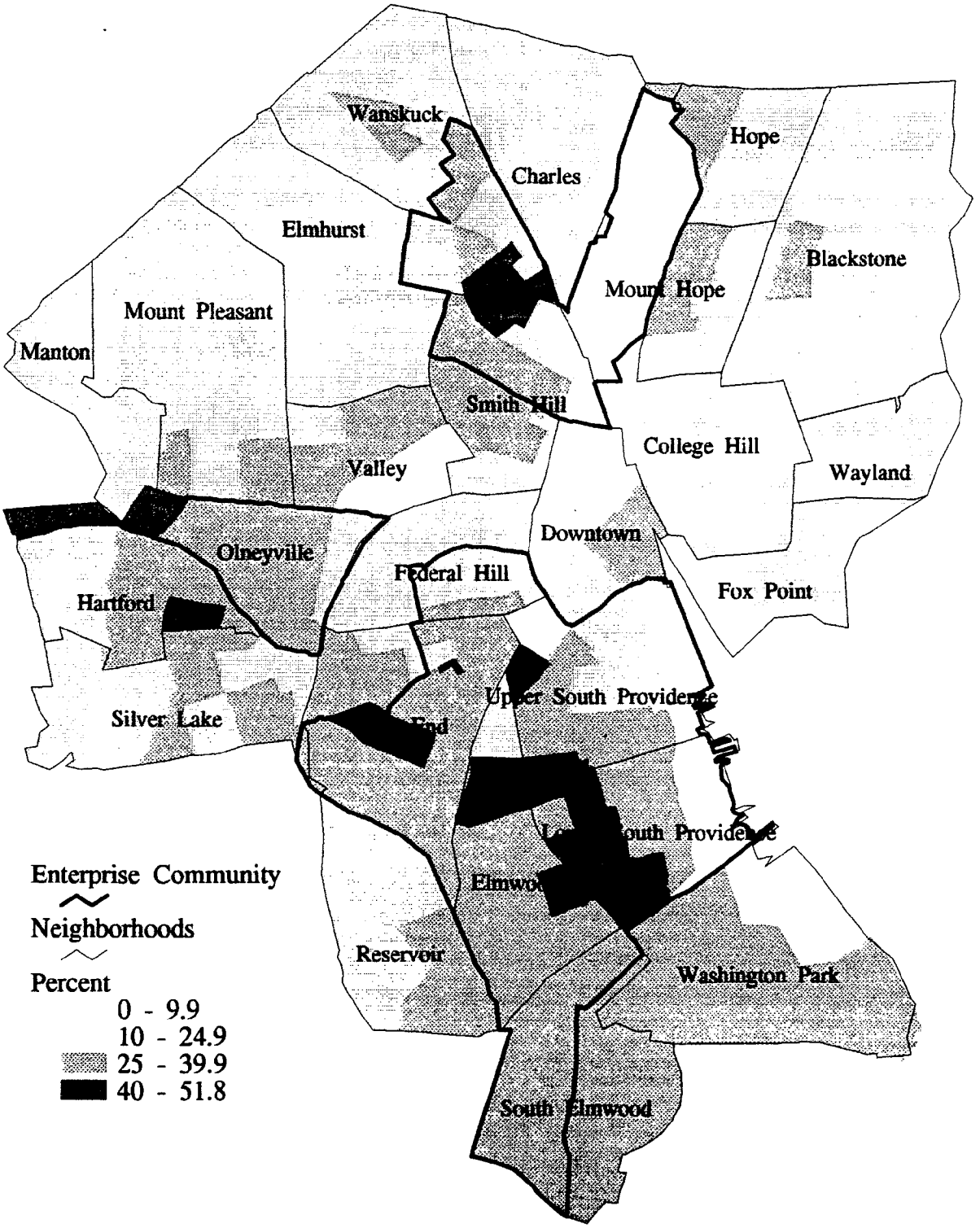
Child Poverty. More than one out of three (35.1%) children and youth in Providence are living below poverty. According to a recent study by the Children's Defense Fund, Providence has the 22nd highest child poverty rate in the country, based on an analysis of 1990 census for the nation's 200 largest cities. The incidence of poverty among children and youth is even more concentrated in the city's Enterprise Community neighborhoods. The 1990 census shows that more than half of the persons under the age of 18 in Olneyville (53.9%), nearly two out of three children and youth in Federal Hill (61%), and more than seven out of ten children and youth in Upper South Providence (71.5%) were living in poverty. Overall, almost half of all poor children and youth in Rhode Island were Providence residents in 1990, with the vast majority of these disadvantaged youngsters residing in the area the city has designated as its Enterprise Community.

Juveniles and the Criminal Justice System. The safety and security of children in Rhode Island has become more perilous in recent years as reflected in substantial increases in such indicators as juvenile arrests for violent crimes and the number of juvenile offenders. Statewide, the number of juvenile arrests for violent crimes increased from 269 in 1988 to 595 in 1992, an increase of 121 percent. During this same five-year period the number of first-time juvenile offenders increased by nearly 60 percent and the number of juvenile offenders who appeared before Rhode Island Family Court four or more times increased by 46 percent. Overall, there was a 25 percent increase in the number of juvenile recidivists in Rhode Island between 1988 and 1992.

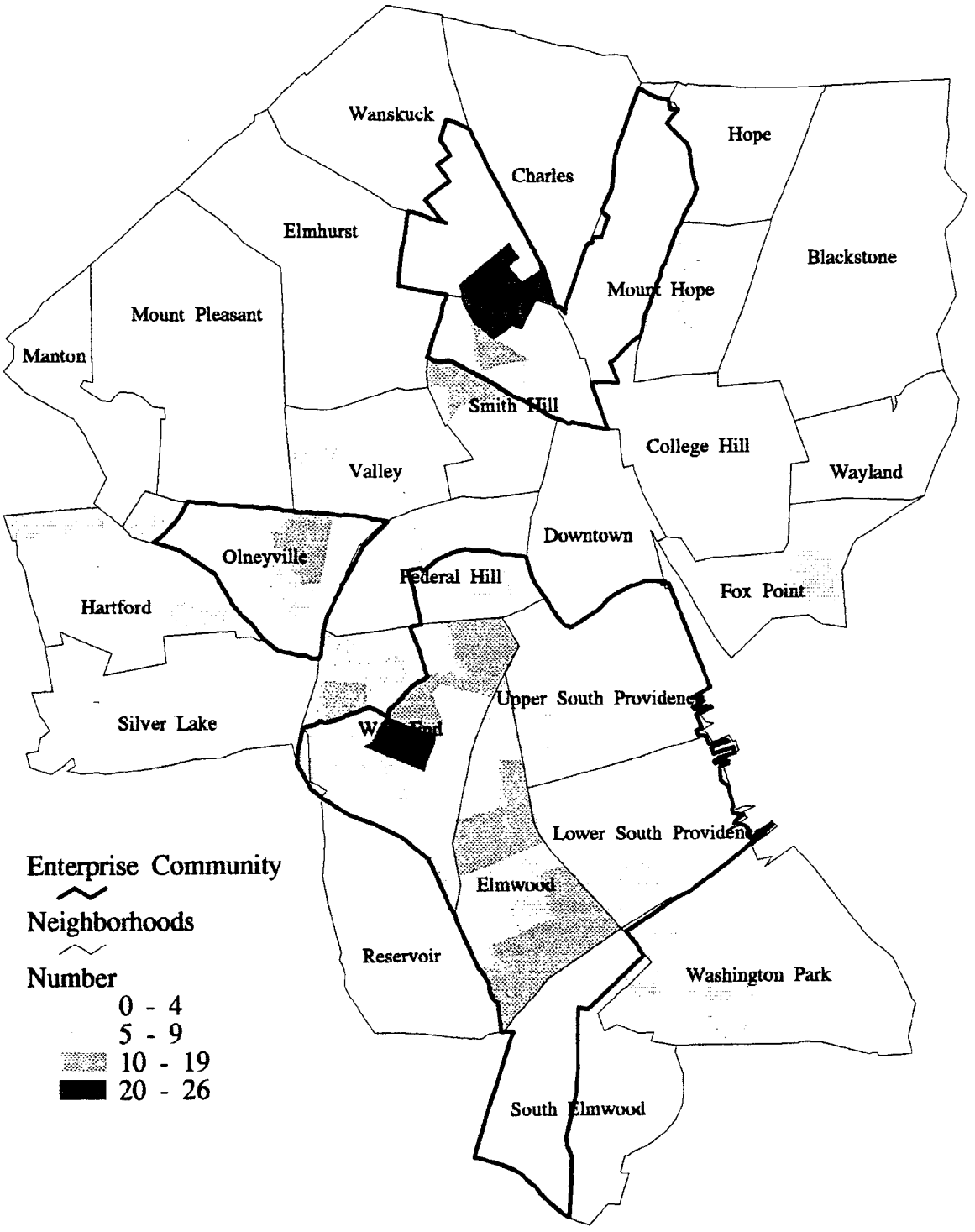
Teen Pregnancy. The percentage of all births in Rhode Island that are to single teens increased from 7.2 percent in 1985 to 8.4 percent in 1990. Rhode Island's ranking in the Annie E. Casey Foundation's national KIDS COUNT rankings on this indicator have dropped from 14th best in 1990 to 29th best in 1993. In Providence, the statistics are even more gripping: about one out of six babies born in Providence in 1989 were delivered to teen mothers. Nearly all of these teen births occurred within the boundaries of Providence's Enterprise Community (see map 15-2). According to data from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, 554 of the state's 1,319 parenting adolescents on AFDC (42%) resided in Providence.

Public and private agencies that provide services to Providence's youth population include: Department of Recreation, Community Centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, Religious Youth Organizations, Youth Athletic Leagues, Boy and Girl Scout troops.

Map 15-1
Percent of Persons Age 0-18, 1990
Providence Census Block Groups



Map 15-2
Number of Births to Teens, 1989
Providence Census Block Groups



Voices from the Community

Youth development had the second lowest rating by those *ProVision* participants who responded to the baseline assessment of current conditions in the twelve policy areas examined.

Members of the Youth Task Force recognized the pressing need to develop youths' self-respect, leadership and character. More than anything else, youth need to be exposed to positive role models who promote education and legitimate business opportunities. The few programs available for children after school and on weekends are often too small and underfunded. Furthermore, youths do not have an effective voice in city affairs. The committee felt that if youth were engaged in the process of developing their communities then they would take ownership for what goes into their community. By and large youth feel no connection to the city's political process and have limited interest in the city's future.

System-wide, the task force agreed that communication and collaboration between city and state agencies, schools, and youth programs was poor to non-existent. Schools were identified as an institution that could play a catalytic role in the community, by providing facilities and coordination for youth programs. The Task Force agreed that schools provide the critical mass of students so know it's important to find a way to connect community agencies to the schools.

Another important issue that arose from the task force meetings was that neighborhood residents should have easier access to youth related annual budgets. The committee felt that with better access to budget information the neighborhoods could better gauge the performance of various youth agencies.

"The worst problem in the world is drug dealers. Some live near me, and they know my brother and some know me. But most of them will get caught. They may get out on bail and sell more drugs. But if they get caught again, they'll be locked up, and this time they will go to jail and stay. If they have a good lawyer, they will get out again. But if I was a cop, I'd put them all in jail."

— Kevin, Grade 5

"I think if we have free programs for kids after school until it gets dark, then there will be less fights going down. People will have lots of fun and there will be people making lots of friends"

— Yarita, age 11

"Kids join gangs because they might have trouble with other people and they need help. They might not have any protection, so they join a gang for protection. Some people just join because they think that it is fun. A gang isn't that fun because you can get hurt or even killed. It's a lot of trouble hanging around in a gang."

— Khun, age 15

Strategies

1. ***Improve communication and coordination of existing youth services and programs between youth service providers, youth and the community.*** Many programs for youths exist, often with the same goals and target populations. Establishing an active communication network among youth service providers would reduce duplication of services and programs and improve the efficiency of funding. Also, when dealing with a population as fragile and impressionable as youth, communication between the major players involved is crucial.

   ### Next Steps

   - Establish a central clearinghouse for all youth agencies to avoid program overlap and to facilitate inter-agency communication and collaboration.
   - Improve and standardize relations between police and youth groups so that police are a regular and positive force in children's lives.
   - Connect youth programs to the private sector and job training. They should work with schools to provide the necessary workplace skills and attitudes for the school to work transition. Programs should be available to provide job training, access to employment for in-school and out of school youths and business/working-world role models for youths.

2. ***Encourage broad-based community participation*** in programs that address youth development issues and target immigrant and other hard to reach populations. Providence has one of the most culturally diverse populations in the United States, yet minority and immigrant representation in city government, city agencies, and programs serving children is severely lacking. The increased emphasis on community participation in program development and governance must be accompanied by an effort to involve people of color and immigrants. Participation in youth programs must include youths and their families.

   ### Next Steps

   - Convene a citywide youth legislature to serve as a forum for youths to address and act on the issues that concern them. The voice of children and teenagers is rarely heard in political discussions. In conjunction with a legislature there should be practical leadership training for youth.
   - Encourage programs that emphasize role models. Children and young adults aspire to be like what they see. Without positive role models available on day-to-day basis, youths will have a hard time realizing their own potential and will lack the motivation to achieve. Youth program leaders and role model should reflect the composition of the population they serve and be able to relate to their experiences.
   - Improve accessibility. Youth agency decision making processes and budgets should be more open to public scrutiny and comment. Large agencies, especially at the state level, are often antagonistic to public inquiries and input. They should rethink their relationship to the people they serve so that communities are empowered and supported in making recommendations.

- Improve public transportation or develop inexpensive private transportation options for parents to get to children's activities and for children to get to their activities.

3. ***Expand the role of schools in a comprehensive approach to youth development.*** The quality of Providence's schools directly impacts the success the city has developing its youth. When students become disinterested in school, they rebel and gravitate toward negative behavior. School curriculum and activities should in themselves empower youth and address community problems while preparing youths for leadership roles in their community. Because the schools have access to the children on a regular basis, school facilities should be utilized more frequently by the community, especially in the summer months. This would make children feel more a part of their schools because they would see it as something other than the educational part of school.

Next Steps

- Better utilize school facilities to meet the needs of all youths, all day, all year. Schools should be used as community centers, a place where children can find safe, enriching and fun activities at all times of the day.
- Incorporate youth issues and youth development programs into neighborhood family centers/Child Opportunity Zones. Efforts should be made to increase participation by parents in youth programs.
- Increase the number and variety of non-school programs for youths after school and on weekends. Youth development should not just mean sports programming. There should be programs which appeal to the interests of all kinds of students. In expanding youth programs, attempt should be made to connect with schools to share facilities and strengthen the role of the school in youth programs after school hours.
- Create a support and opportunity network for youths not going to college. This should include neighborhood-based job training, apprenticeship programs and role-models.

Assets and Opportunities

Youth Fair Chance. As described in greater detail in Chapter 9, Youth Fair Chance strives to close the gap between schools, students and employers. It will provide in-school and out-of-school youth with the training and support that will lead to access to the job market. Training will take place in job-specific clusters that focus intensively on the skills necessary for employment in jobs. They will also stress total-quality management skills which businesses have come to expect in all employees.

Providence Department of Recreation. City Recreation offers an extensive number of programs targeted towards youths. It operates five full-time and two part-time recreation centers with sporting, artistic and cultural activities for boys and girls. Basketball, baseball, volleyball and leagues are open to all across the city year round. Summer programs include family swimming, midnight basketball, a lunch program, and trips to the oceanside Camp Cronin. Twenty youths are employed in the Mayor's Youth Squad to clean up parks and playgrounds in their neighborhoods.

City Year

City Year unites youths from diverse backgrounds for a year of full-time community service in the Providence community. This year, fifty-five corps members between the ages of 17 and 23 have volunteered over 55,000 hours during the nine-month, full-time program.

Corps members served as volunteers in a wide range of activities in the Greater Providence community, acting as tutors and mentors in the Fox Point Elementary School, building three playgrounds, renovating four homes for low-income housing, developing and presenting a curriculum on violence prevention to middle schools, and much more. On April 30, 1994, City Year Rhode Island held its first annual Serve-A-Thon, inspiring 1,500 volunteers to serve at 75 project sites and raise over $40,000 to support the program.

The City Year youth corps is a diverse and dynamic group. The program is evenly divided between men and women. People of color comprise 62% of the program — 27% African American, 9% Asian American, 21% Latino and 5% Native American. Over 65% of the corps members are from Providence or other Rhode Island cities, 16% are from suburban Rhode Island and 18% are from outside the state. Also, over 50% of corps members are college graduates, in college or planning to attend while the other 48% are high school graduates or enrolled in GED programs.

City Year Providence is only the second program of its kind in the country, an expansion of the pilot program in Boston. Competition to be an expansion city was tough; over 50 cities sent in requests and delegates. The Rhode Island State Commission for Community Service played an integral role in representing Providence in the application process.

Clear support from the private sector, civic leaders and community organizations was and continues to be instrumental in City Year's success. Founding sponsors, Rhode Island Hospital Trust, Fleet Charitable Trust, the Feinstein Foundation, and the Echoing Green Foundation along with the NYNEX Foundation, the Rhode Island Foundation and Timberland led the way for strong private support of the program.

Due in large part to City Year's success and its status as a National Demonstration program (Subtitle D), it is one of the state's four nominees for an AmeriCorps community service grant. City Year hopes to expand its corps to 77 youths during the upcoming year,

On the heels of program successes in Boston and Providence, expansion is planned for next year to San Jose, CA; Columbia, SC; Columbus, OH; and Chicago, IL.

Children's Crusade

..You have brains in your head, you have feet in your shoes,

you can steer yourself in any direction you choose." — Dr. Seuss

The Children's Crusade is based on the philosophy that all children, regardless of background, have the ability to succeed. One of its goals is to make higher education a realistic option for all Rhode Islanders through tuition insurance and support services.

The Crusade was founded in 1989 by the state Commissioner of Higher Education. Beginning in 1991 and for ten years thereafter, all third graders are invited to join. At this time they promise to work hard in school and avoid alcohol, drugs, trouble with the law and early parenthood. Students who are income-eligible at the time of high school graduation will receive scholarships for higher education and career training programs to which they gain admission.

The Crusade is designed not just to fund students who are eligible to go to college, but also to increase the number of people who are interested and able to do so. One way to effectively accomplish these goals is by working collaboratively by other nonprofit and private institutions.

In collaboration with other agencies, it will provide programs for mentoring, tutoring, substance abuse prevention and general social development. The Crusade awarded grants 32 community agencies, school and organizations to establish Crusader Clubs, where mentors provide activities, support and friendship. In cooperation with the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Workforce 2000, the Children's Crusade has established 12 Tutorial Resource Assistance Centers in five school districts. Additionally all 11 of

Rhode Island's public and private institutions have joined the Crusade pledging support and scholarships.

Over $4 million dollars are currently in the Children's Crusade scholarship endowment with an aggressive fundraising campaign underway. Out of the 20,000 third graders expected to participate in the 23-year run of the program, 10,000 are expected to qualify for scholarship assistance. This translates into $40 million in scholarships and invaluable help in the lives of Rhode Island youth.

Like City Year, the Children's Crusade is also one of Rhode Islands AmeriCorps nominees. The Crusade proposes placing 26 AmeriCorps volunteers in 13 teams of two in seven Rhode Island districts (three will be located in Providence) to establish mentoring programs that will serve 780 at-risk children. ■

Department of Children Youth and Families
Family Preservation and Support Initiative

This initiative by DCYF is an attempt to restructure its services so that they facilitate the healthy development of children by supporting and strengthening families and the communities in which they live. Over the next year, DCYF will undertake a planning process to re-orient its philosophy towards family-focused, community-based service delivery which eliminates the unnecessary separation of children from their families. DCYF policies will respect and value cultural diversity and seek to establish permanency and stability in the lives of children through reunification with parents, adoption or other permanent living arrangements.

For this restructuring process, DCYF has adopted the goals and strategies identified by the Families First initiative.

- Improve child health, including better birth outcomes reduced incidence of preventable disease and disability, and better overall physical and mental health
- Improve child development, i.e., more children achieving normal milestones in cognitive, emotional, and social development, as they grow.
- Reduce barriers to adequate school performance. More children should enter school with the cognitive and social skills needed for learning, fewer children should need remediation services, and fewer children should face barriers to regular school attendance and grade progression.

- Improve family functioning that promotes a child's health development, including increased family stability and positive family support for children; and lower incidence of abuse and neglect. ■

Southeast Asian Youth and Family Development Project

The Southeast Asian Youth and Family Development Project addresses the needs of the Southeast Asian population through enhanced collaboration and cooperation. It is coordinated thorough the Southeast Asian Consortium which includes the Hmong United Association of Rhode Island, the Cambodian Society of Rhode Island, the Southeast Asian Business Association of Rhode Island, the Smith Hill Center, the Lao Association of Rhode Island, the Lao Women's Association of Rhode Island, Family Court and St. Joseph's Hospital.

The SAYFDP concentrates on identifying Southeast Asian youth who are gang members, gang affiliated, or at risk of joining gangs. Through daily street outreach and referrals from the Providence Community Police, the School Department, Community Centers, and community groups and families, the program has identified 432 at-risk youth. The Project has recruited these gang members and potential gang members to participate in the club-sponsored by 7 youth clubs.

During the summer, the Project and the Southeast Asian Socio-Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), sponsor an eight-week Southeast Asian Summer Academy at Providence College. This program offers math, reading, writing, science, English, art, computers and environmental issues for Southeast Asian youngsters in grades 3 to 12. Tutors and volunteers recruited specifically for the project assist certified teachers. The students study the culture of their native countries, geography, similarities and differences in language, customs, currency, family structure, marriage, special ceremonies, holidays, greetings and religions. In addition to academic tutoring, the young people take part in sports and recreation activities and field trips. A Providence Community Police officer speaks to the students about gang issues. At the end of the eight-week program, students "graduate," receiving certificates at a graduation ceremony at the College.

The SAYFDP strives to strengthen families by providing parenting skills training in the newly developed Southeast Asian Parents Association. The Association works with the Providence School Department and community agencies to advance programs to aid Southeast Asian youth. At the New Year and in the autumn the Association sponsors Asian-American Festivals which feature Asian and American foods, Asian Classical Dance and American Music. The SEAP Association has a booth with parent volunteers handing out information brochures and flyers in all languages.

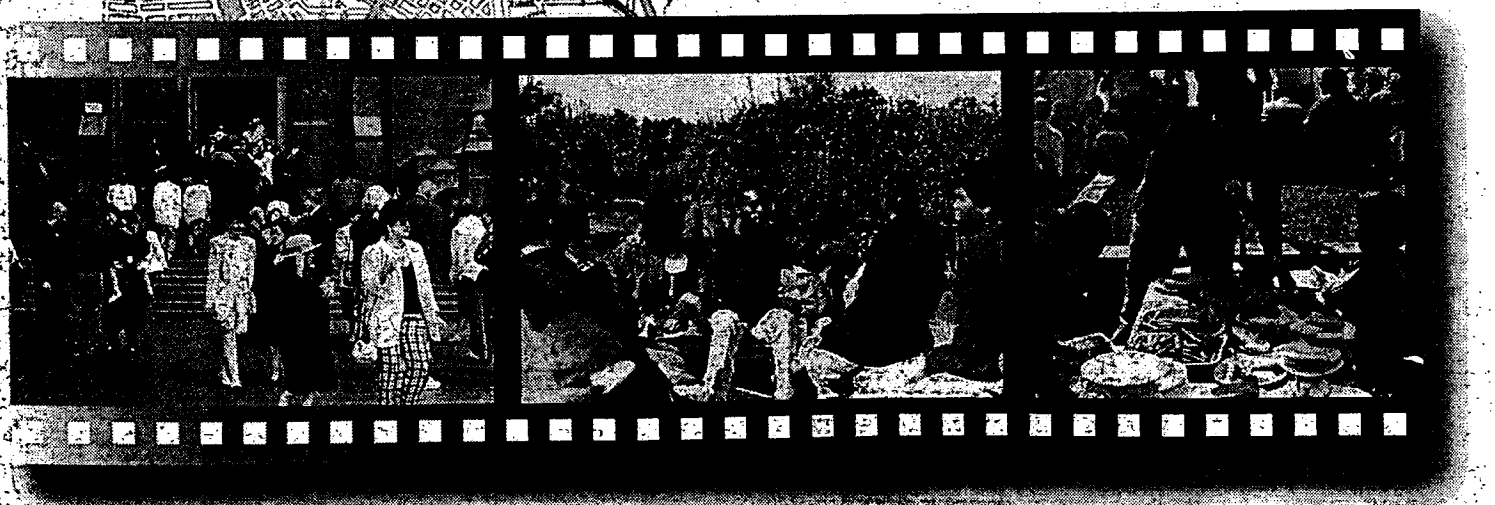
The SAYFDP publishes a quarterly newspaper, "New Hope," which provides information on programs, what's going on in the community, and Southeast Asian issues. It is published in four languages, English, Lao, Cambodian and Hmong. ■

Youth Speak Out

Although the PROBE report has concluded without question that "better schools are within the reach of Providence," students of color continue to receive a less than equal education. They have been denied the sincere support and proper information needed to afford them the opportunity to see higher education as a realistic possibility. This denial combined with an outdated curriculum and a poor track record of providing positive, identifiable role models in students' lives has created a subculture of disinterested and unmotivated students in the public school system.

Recent graduates of the Providence public school system, concerned community members, and high school students held a "Youth Speak Out" forum to address these concerns. This community-initiated project, developed, facilitated, and recorded by present students and graduates, was a dynamic community-focused forum that provided students an opportunity to discuss and express their views about the issues that affect their communities and families. Approximately 120 students representing every public high school in Providence participated in the forum. Also on hand were successful high school graduates and community leaders who spoke about the pitfalls that await youths. They also discussed ways of handling the negativity that larger society directs at people of color. The Youth Speak Out offered the students in attendance a nurturing environment to share their hopes and fears as well as the opportunity to talk about their futures and the world beyond high school.

Supporting Families



Chapter 16
Supporting Families

Vision Statement

Providence will become a city where families are nurtured and supported by neighborhood-based comprehensive family centers. The needs of our families must be addressed holistically and conveniently. The family that doesn't know where its next meal is coming from, owns no transportation and speaks little English cannot be expected to navigate the bureaucratic complexity of the social service establishment in the city and throughout the state. Family centers will provide a universal access point and referral system for all the social and health services families need. They will provide continuing education and family skills training and be connected to job training and employment networks to address the long term needs of families.

Because Providence has such a significant minority and immigrant population, we must make a special effort to reach the families that all too often fall through the cracks of our system. Family centers will train community residents as staff to develop close community ties, provide culturally appropriate services and fulfill their job training mission. As a result, the services provided by community centers will be community-driven. The message sent will be one of empowerment.

At the city and state level, a coordinated information system will support neighborhood family centers. Social service providers and agencies, schools, neighborhood centers and community groups will all be "on-line" to improve the referral system. This will facilitate "one-stop shopping" for families through their family centers.

Context

Providence is home to a disproportionate share of the state's needy families. These families come in all different sizes, compositions, and racial and cultural backgrounds. On the whole, they are much less well off economically than families residing in other communities in Rhode Island. According to the 1990 census, the median family income in Providence was $28,342, about 28% less than the statewide median family income of $39,172.

Rhode Island and Providence have been engaged during the past two years in a number of long-term strategic planning efforts aimed at restructuring the human service system in Rhode Island in order to improve the quality of life for children and families. These efforts, which were introduced in Chapter 2 and are highlighted in this chapter, include the following major initiatives:

- ***Needs for the Nineties,*** a two-year intensive research effort conducted by a voluntary team of researchers from the public and private sectors under the general direction of the United Way of Southeastern New England and SJS, Inc., a public policy research group. This effort produced the most comprehensive report ever completed in Rhode Island pertaining to human services.
- ***Families First,*** a comprehensive statewide strategic plan for children and families that was prepared under the Pew Charitable Trusts' Children's Initiative program. This plan also included separate strategic plans that were specific to the needs of Newport County and Providence. Over a 15-month period, more than 400 citizens, nonprofit professionals, public officials, and business and civic leaders participated in the planning process.
- ***Child Opportunity Zones,*** a central concept of the report of the 21st Century Education Commission released in March 1992, is built upon the premise that some high-need communities will require a targeted and concentrated delivery of social services at or near the school site to ensure that children arrive at school ready to learn. The report directed the Department of Education to become actively involved in forging linkages and cooperative relationships between schools, social agencies, and children and their families. In 1993, the Rhode Island Department of Education awarded Child Opportunity Zone planning grants to 20 schools statewide, including the William D'Abate Elementary School in Providence.
- ***Children's Cabinet.*** In addition and in support of these efforts, legislation creating the Children's Cabinet was adopted by the General Assembly in the spring of 1991. The Children's Cabinet includes the following departments: Administration; Children, Youth and Families; Elementary and Secondary Education; Health; Higher Education; Human Services; Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals; State Library Services; and Substance Abuse. The law requires the Children's Cabinet to prepare a five-year comprehensive statewide plan and proposed budget for an integrated state child service system. This plan was adopted in December 1992. The Children's Cabinet meets on a monthly basis and is a forum for addressing policy issues, particularly those that cut across department and agency lines, that relate to the well-being of children and families in Rhode Island.

As a result of these efforts, there is a growing consensus in the city and the state that we must move toward a human service delivery system that holistically addresses all of the needs of children and their families. The preferred vehicle for achieving this vision is a neighborhood-based family center.

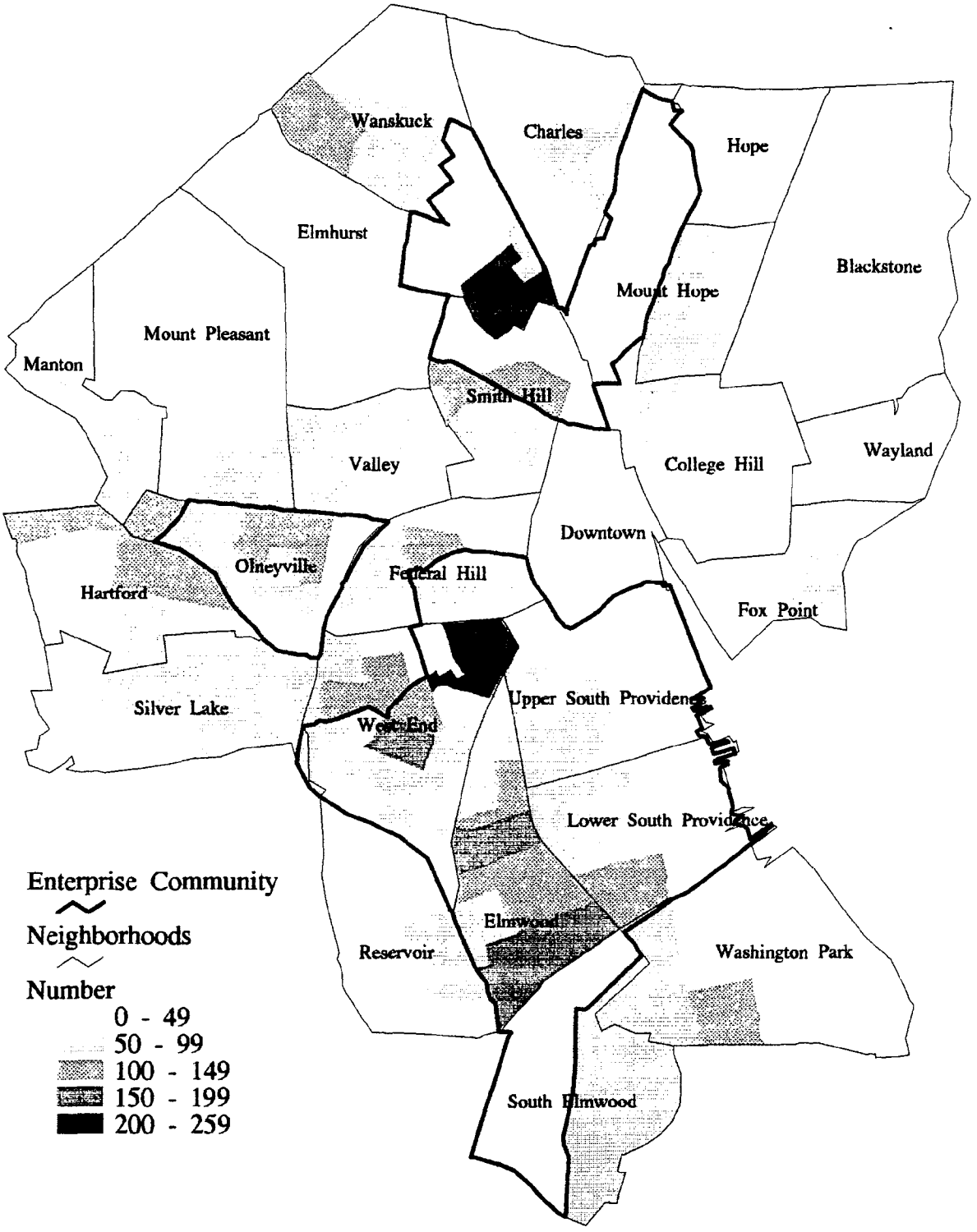
The number of families in Providence declined by about 5 percent during the 1980s, declining from 36,726 in 1980 to 35,025 in 1990. Families with children, which accounted for about half of all families in Providence in 1990, increased by 2 percent over the past decade, rising from 17,098 in 1980 to 17,459. The 1990 census

reported that the number of female-headed families with children in Providence increased 15.3 percent over the number reported in 1980. Over the last two decades, the number of female-headed families has increased by nearly 70 percent, rising from 4,010 in 1970 to 6,805 in 1990. In 1990, three out of ten (29.9%) female-headed families with children in Rhode Island resided in Providence; more than four out of ten (42.6%) of Rhode Island's female-headed families with children in poverty lived in Providence.

The number of families with children below poverty increased by 13.3 percent between 1980 and 1990, rising from 5,703 in 1980 to 6,461 in 1990. Overall, about one in five families in Providence (18.3%) had incomes below the poverty level according to the 1990 census. Families residing within the boundaries of Providence's Enterprise Community were much more likely to be living in poverty than were families outside these areas: About one in four families in the Federal Hill (26.9%) and Smith Hill (27%) neighborhoods, one in three families in Lower South Providence (30.1%), the West End (31.4%), Elmwood (33.3%), and Olneyville (35.5%), and nearly half of all families in Upper South Providence (47.3%) reported incomes below the poverty level.

According to figures compiled by the Rhode Island Department of Health, Providence ranked "highest" on more than 75% of the indicators the department uses to track maternal and child health needs . These indicators include, among others, fertility rate, teen fertility rate, pregnancy rate, percent of women with inadequate prenatal care, percent of single mothers, percent of low birthweight births, and infant mortality (see maps 16-1).

Map 16-1
AFDC Households, 1993
Providence Census Block Groups



Voices from the Community

The Supporting Families Task Force overwhelmingly identified the need for a decentralized, neighborhood-based human and social service system. Community control in the design and delivery of services with city, state and federal support was seen as essential in getting the appropriate services to those who need them the most. The task force also identified the fragmentation of services as posing a significant hardship on families. Bureaucratic complexities overwhelm many families, especially those vulnerable families that have limited English proficiency.

Given the ethnic, racial and generational diversity of Providence, the concept of family must be used in the broadest sense possible so none are excluded. The notion of family must be culturally sensitive. The traditional nuclear family is not an accurate description of most of the families in need in Providence. The special needs of extended and broken families must be taken into account in all aspects of family services. Services should be provided to all who need them, regardless of citizenship.

"We have to fight for everything. The system should be organized so that you could find out about all the services available. It's frustrating to have to keep calling one agency after another. Most families can't do that. In a crisis, they are lost."

— Married couple with severely retarded twins

"You don't know where to turn, what the rules are, who to see. Our son has been involved with six different service groups; there's no coordination."

— A parent

"There was nowhere to go to find out what assistance was available to you. I knew about food stamps, but you're on your own to find out what else is there...There's nothing that connects these programs so that people below a certain income level know what things are available to them."

— Single mother of three

"You shouldn't be dropped from services once you start a job. They should make it easier for you to rejoin the rolls if things don't work out."

— A disabled man

Strategies

1. ***Establish neighborhood-focused funding and delivery systems to provide access, referral and basic social services for community residents.*** Although a wide array of social services already exist in Providence neighborhoods, the complexity and disjointedness of the system often prevents these services from getting to those most in need. All neighborhoods should be served by a local referral and access center, either a family center or child opportunity zone, which serves as a clearinghouse for available services, a vehicle for neighborhood needs assessment, and a provider of unavailable services. The ultimate goal of any such arrangement should be the reduction of barriers between social services, families and community, and the encouragement of active community participation in neighborhood service delivery.

   Next Steps

   - Establish a citywide network of family centers or school-based Child Opportunity Zones that provide access to a seamless web of social services and family support. These centers/COZs should not duplicate existing structures, but improve coordination and communication while strengthening the consumers voice in the provision of services.
   - Use neighborhood family centers as an access point to relevant city and state departments, such as the Department of Health and the Department of Children, Youth and Families. Significant interest exists in state agencies to decentralize service provision. Cooperative relationships between these agencies and community groups and consumers should be developed under the auspices of Child Opportunity Zones/neighborhood family centers.
   - Develop community/consumer governance boards at family centers/COZ with real power in the center's day-to-day operations and day-to-day plans. Neighborhood service delivery is intended to be convenient and to give consumers a real voice in determining how and what services are provided. Family centers must undertake aggressive outreach and leadership development for neighborhood residents.
   - Provide comprehensive and inexpensive transportation for families to family centers, schools, health clinics and other necessary services.

2. ***Provide families with a means to move from dependency to economic self-sufficiency in conjunction with neighborhood-based service delivery.*** Family support is broader than counseling. It entails a comprehensive approach which respects all the challenges faced by the family: social, cultural and economic. To the greatest extent possible, families should be exposed to a continuum of services that provides social and economic support and training necessary to move to independence.

   Next Steps

   - Provide job training in social services which could lead to employment of trained individuals as service providers in their neighborhood center. Centers should be connected to the full array of job training opportunities and local job networks.
   - Include family skills education, family support services, and community-based business skills development in family centers/COZ. Programs should meet the special needs of

inner-city families: parenting classes for young men, support for grandparents taking care of young children, and support for children taking care of elderly parents.

- Recruit and train neighborhood residents to work in family centers. Support services can be provided most effectively by workers who are from the same ethic, economic, and/or cultural background.
- Develop a family-to-family network, nurtured through community organizations until it can stand on its own.

3. ***Improve coordination of statewide and citywide services so that they support neighborhood-centered delivery.*** Neighborhood-centered delivery will only be effective if it secures real access to a wide array of services traditionally provided at the city and state level.

Next Steps

- Create a referral and intake network which feeds into neighborhood services and facilitates "one-stop shopping" for families in need. This entails active, computerized communication between all "front line" intake agencies, including community centers, Child Opportunity Zones and state agencies.
- Develop coordinated and broad information systems which support decentralized, comprehensive service delivery and reduce bureaucratic complexity and redundancy. This must occur concurrently at two levels. State and city governments and agencies must be able to communicate with one another and share information. Community centers must develop similar computer capabilities and be able to log onto state and city networks. Special care must be taken that these information systems safeguard client privacy.
- Promote cooperation with schools, community centers, etc. to share physical and transportation resources. Establish a neighborhood by neighborhood inventory of available physical and personnel resources and forge partnerships to share these resources.
- Adopt a 10-year horizon to evaluate the success of programs that attempt to support families. Investing in people is a long-term process often without immediately quantifiable results. If we are serious about providing long-term support to families, there must be a similar long-term commitment from the political process.

Assets and Opportunities

Children's Cabinet. To facilitate interdepartmental communication, the Children's Cabinet consisting of the directors of all state agencies with child-related services has been established. The Cabinet has taken the lead in developing a coordinated, long-term strategy for participating agencies. Issues currently under discussion include statewide information systems and neighborhood service delivery.

Pathways to Independence/JOBS Program. The mission of the Pathways to Independence/JOBS Program is to promote self-sufficiency through employment for individuals who receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children funds in order for them to create a more economically independent life for themselves and their families. The program promotes coordination of service at all levels of government and emphasizes accountability for both participants and service providers. Pathways/Jobs assist individuals with child care, transportation, and other work-related expenses to support them while they attend training and educational activities. The program provides special services including: assessment and training, literacy skills training, adult basic education, GED, ESL, job development and placement, classroom training, post-secondary education, and supportive work and on-the-job training.

Providence Community Centers

Providence is fortunate to have an extensive network of 11 multi-purpose community centers that provide an array of services the meet the needs of all people of all ages. Some centers have roots dating as far back as the turn of the century, while others were established as a result of the urban redevelopment programs of the 1960s. Centers shown in italics are located within the Enterprise Community designated zone.

Services Available	DaVinci	*Elmwood*	*Federal Hill*	Hartford Park/ Perry	*Joslin*	Mount Hope	*Nickerson House*	Silver Lake	*Smith Hill*	Wash. Park	*West End*
Seniors/Handicapped											
Noon Meals	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Social/Rec/Fitness	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X
Counseling/Casework	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Transportation			X	X					X		X
Visits/Advocacy	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Crisis Information	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Elderly Health Services	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
Education/Guest Speakers	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	
Arts/Crafts	X	X	X			X	X	X		X	
Family Services											
Counseling	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Emergency Food	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Visits/Advocacy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Housing Assistance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Emergency Transp.			X	X		X			X		
Budget Planning	X		X	X	X		X				X
Translation	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	
Family Health	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Furniture/Clothing		X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Fuel		X						X			
Legal Referral	X				X	X	X				
Library							X				
Adults											
Arts/Crafts		X	X				X		X		
Education	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Events	X	X	X				X	X	X		X
Recreation			X				X	X			X
Youth											
Day care			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Recreation		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Education/Training	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Counseling	X	X	X				X	X	X		
Summer Lunch		X			X	X				X	X
Social Clubs			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Employment	X					X		X			
Summer Camp		X								X	X
Substance Abuse	X							X			

Families First

Through a planning grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts, Rhode Island and Providence have developed a strategy for restructuring the social service system for children and families. The central themes of the Families First reconfiguration of the human services system include:

- Holistic, culturally-competent, family-centered services, designed and administered in concert with consumers.
- Integrated health, education and social services delivered at the community level.
- Streamlined administrative procedures, strengthened investments in consumer outreach and preventive services, maximized revenues and reinvestment of savings in services for families.
- Increased public accountability through increased public information and leadership development in support of investments in families.

The Families First philosophy is to provide conveniently all services necessary for the family to be self-sufficient. In this respect, it closely follows the recommendations of the United Way *Needs for the Nineties* report. The centerpiece of the proposal, neighborhood family centers, provide direct or open access to a continuum of core services in health care, education, child and family development and economic development.

Although money for implementation through the Trusts will not be available as was expected, implementation of the plan is moving ahead on a variety of fronts. The neighborhood family centers concept as defined by Families First is essentially the same as the Child Opportunity Zones advanced by the Department of Education. As the COZ network expands, the de facto neighborhood family centers will be based in schools. Instead of creating another layer of administration in service delivery, COZ/family centers will become a referral and access point for existing services. They will work closely with Providence's existing Community Center Network. COZ/family centers will give parents an opportunity to speak with a unified voice and take control over how and where services are provided to them. They will also coordinate the fragmented service delivery system which is now in place.

At an administrative level, the Children's Cabinet of state agency directors is making progress towards coordinating programs and standardizing information and referral systems across the state. ■

Providence Housing Authority Family Investment Center

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development is making a total of $74 million available to public and Indian housing authorities for the rehabilitation of spaces near public housing developments to function as family investment centers. The Providence Housing Authority is interested in expanding its package of services for public housing residents by acquiring and rehabilitating space near one of its large public housing developments, and is currently developing a comprehensive service package with local providers.

The envisioned family investment center will function as a "one stop shopping" service center. The PHA has experience with comprehensive service provision through its Family Self Sufficiency program. This HUD mandated program allows public housing residents and recipients of Section 8 housing assistance to enter into contracts with the PHA. In exchange for housing assistance, enrollees will outline five-year plans for the achievement of economic independence through employment. The enrollees are then assisted in finding suitable employment and/or enrolling in an education program–ESL, GED, state or community college. The program includes an escrow savings account feature whereby participants who experience rent increases due to rising earned income are eligible to have some or all of the increase refunded following successful completion of the contract.

The PHA's concept for the family investment center includes several features likely to facilitate successful service delivery. These are:

- Physical proximity to public housing developments, ensuring frequent contact with residents and service provider awareness of neighborhood and family issues relevant to the achievement of specified goals.
- A case management team approach to service provision. A staff of case managers, each with a distinct area of expertise, will develop and monitor individual service strategies.
- Job development and supportive work components. Family Self Sufficiency contracts must include at least 12 months of full-time employment as an objective. The PHA anticipates the center functioning as a service provision site and as a placement and employment monitoring agency.
- Whole family approach to service provision. The PHA anticipates melding services funded from a variety of sources to successfully address the needs of both low income mothers and their children.
- Extraordinary client capacity to focus on individual training and employment goals. PHA residents are living in stable and affordable housing and are therefore better able to focus on achieving economic independence than low income people who are homeless or paying rent that is more than 50 percent of income.

The Providence Housing Authority will submit its proposal to HUD in July 1994 and expects to be notified of funding by September 1994. ■

RIte Care

Through the RIte Care program, Rhode Island is at the forefront of the nation in providing universal managed health care for all citizens.

RIte Care is designed to promote preventative and primary care to improve the health of the low-income populations. The program assures every participant a primary care physician and removes the barriers that low-income people have in accessing services. To assure care as well as coverage, RIte Care emphasizes primary and preventative medicine; addresses language transportation and cultural barriers; increases provider capacity; provides outreach and education; and meets the social needs of families at risk.

Eligibility for RIte Care includes all individuals on AFDC/medical assistance, pregnant women enrolled in the RIte Start Program, all uninsured pregnant women in the state and uninsured or under-insured children under the age of six and under 250% of the poverty line. The program is expected to enroll about 75,000 individuals–23,000 adults (primarily single mothers), 42,000 children currently participating in Medicaid, 9,000 newly eligible children under the age of six and several thousand pregnant women.

Comprehensive health care coverage will be provided for all enrollees including primary and preventative care, hospitalizations, prescriptions, laboratory and other tests, dental care, mental health counseling and substance abuse treatment. Enhanced services will be added to the basic benefit package to cover transportation, interpreters and health education classes. Every enrollee will have a primary care physician responsible for providing or arranging all medical care.

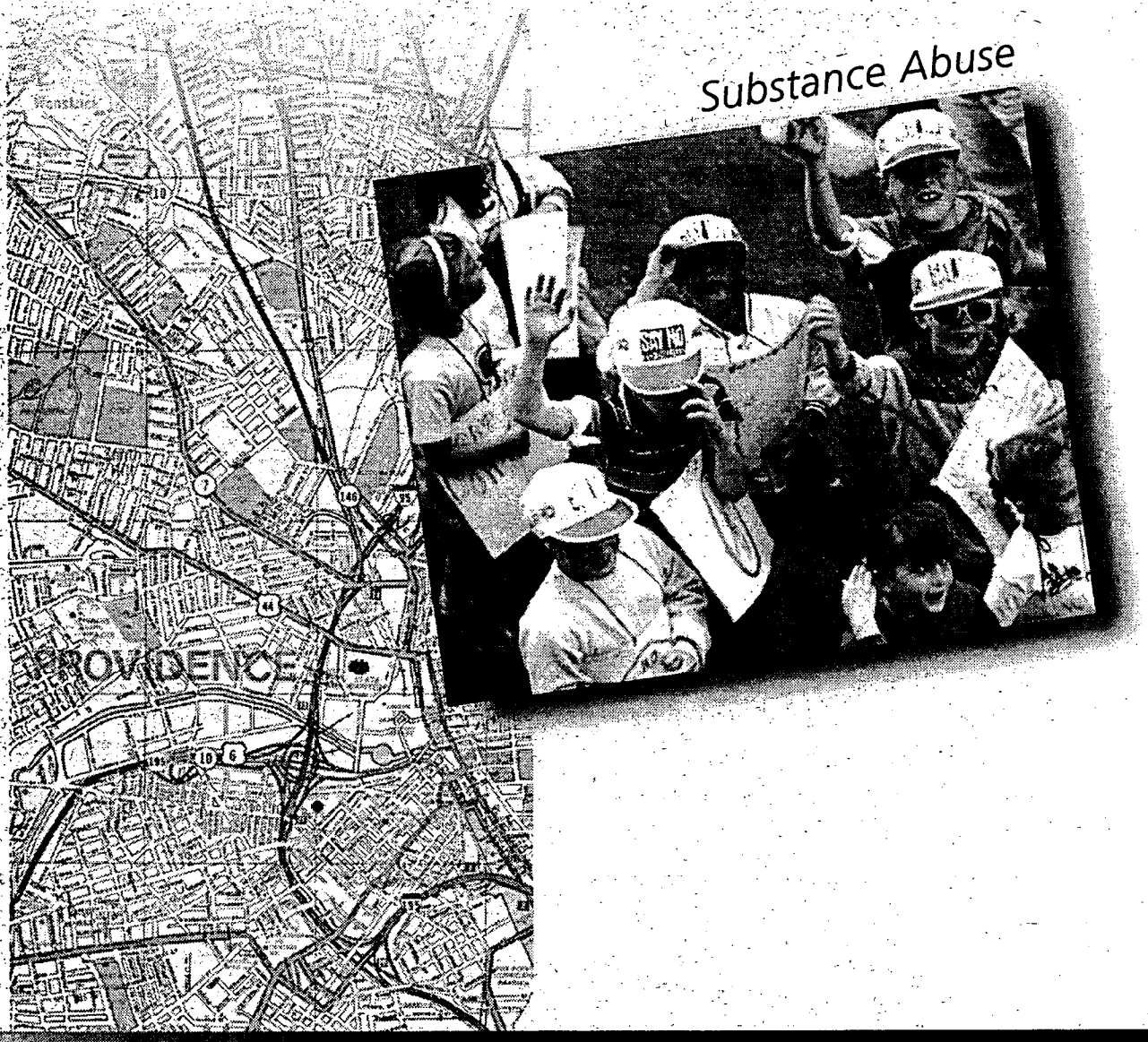
The RIte Care program includes costs sharing requirements that vary with the enrollee's income and eligibility category. A $5 fixed co-payment is charged for unnecessary use of emergency room or emergency transportation services. Enrollees with income over 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, will be subject to more substantial cost-sharing for inpatient hospital admissions, prescriptions, ambulatory surgical procedures, and all office visits except those involving prenatal and preventative care. These participants may opt to pay a monthly premium in lieu of cost-sharing.

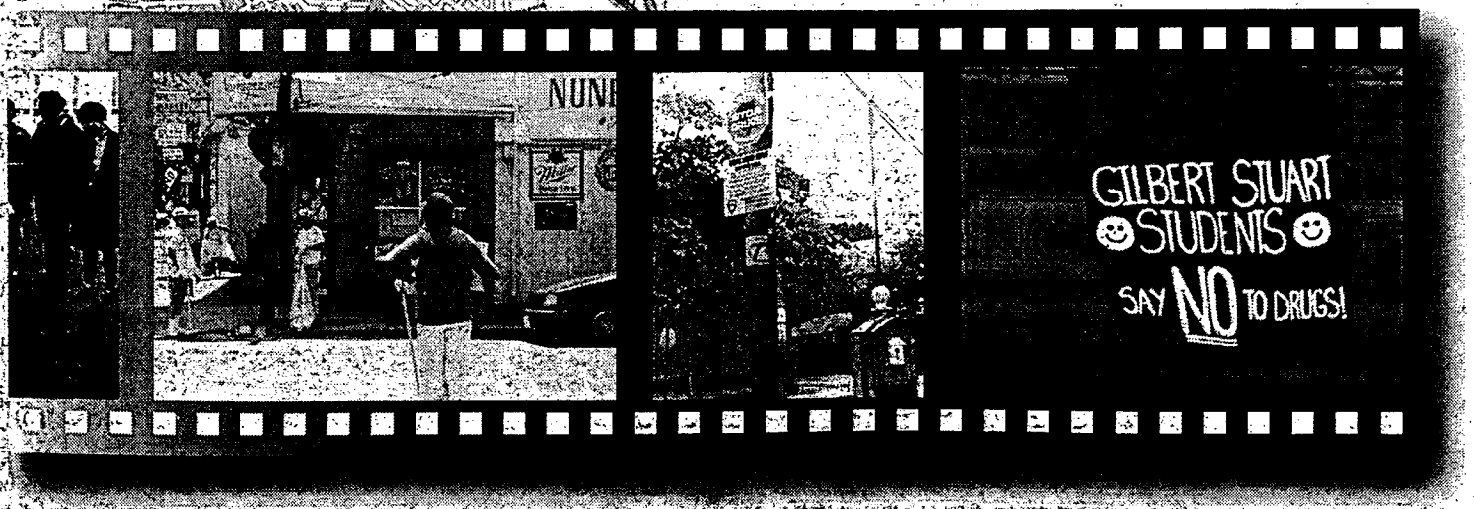
RIte Care is scheduled to begin enrolling those who are currently uninsured in June 1994. Beginning in July, current recipients of AFDC/Medicaid will be enrolled upon their recertification for AFDC. RIte Care is a first and important step to assure universal health care coverage for all Rhode Islanders. ■

State Welfare Reform

The Sundlun Administration and the Department of Human Services have advanced a set of welfare reform proposals which strive to facilitate and encourage the welfare to work transition. At the heart of this proposal is the recognition that the welfare recipient who enters the workforce needs an ongoing set of financial and social supports in order to make the transition successful in the long run. The financial centerpiece of the proposed reforms is a restructured benefit calculation system. This makes it more feasible financially to stay in the workforce by providing a work incentive of continued benefits for up to one year. In addition, close to 500 recipients in the Pathways to Independence program will receive ongoing child care, aggressive job search support, earned income credits and medical coverage. By maintaining these supports, it is expected that the new worker will be advanced in her job and eventually reach the point of self-sufficiency. In terms of jobs, the welfare system will offer employers temporary wage subsidies for hiring AFDC recipients.

The second prong of the welfare reform encourages parental and individual accountability and responsibility. These qualifications on benefits are intended to encourage behaviors and lifestyles which are conducive to long term self-sufficiency. Welfare recipients will have limited ability to refuse work and will not receive increased entitlement for children conceived while the parent is receiving welfare. Teenagers must remain in school for their families to continue to receive the same level grant and minor parents must remain in their parents home in order to collect, except in cases where the family situation would jeopardize the minor parent or her child's mental or physical health. ■


PROVIDENCE
Substance Abuse


GILBERT STUART
STUDENTS
SAY NO TO DRUGS!

Chapter 17
Substance Abuse

Vision Statement

Providence views substance abuse as a public health problem. Individual denial is at the core of any substance abuser's addiction, and social denial is the reason why answers to solving substance abuse are elusive. We must make a community-wide effort to overcome the "us" versus "them" mentality the "war on drugs" has propagated in order to develop realistic and humane means to combat the substance abuse problem.

Providence will be a city which makes a concerted effort to address drug and alcohol abuse in every aspect of community life. Education will be the basis of prevention. Schools, community centers, social service agencies and agencies, and drug abuse prevention groups will work with users and non-users, children and their families. Treatment and rehabilitation will be provided on demand by a tightly woven network of schools, public health agencies and institutions, public safety agencies, and the private sector. It will be available for the 15-year-old first-time experimenter as well as the 60-year-old long-term alcoholic. Strong and swift but appropriate punishment as a consequence for related criminal activity will be balanced with effective treatment and rehabilitation.

Context

Substance abuse is an important component of the multi-faceted problems that negatively impact people and places. The sale and use of drugs has a devastating influence on communities, encouraging many to flee and causing those who remain to live in fear.

A recent citywide public opinion survey reported that one in ten (11.1%) Providence residents considered drug abuse the greatest problem facing the city. This survey was conducted as part of the Neighborhood Empowerment for Prevention Project, a five-year program to address these problems on a neighborhood basis. The NEPP is a coalition of neighborhood residents, organizations and businesses working together toward eliminating neighborhood deterioration caused by alcohol and other drug abuse.

In 1991, over 20 percent of all arrests for Part II crimes in Providence were directly related to the consumption of alcohol or drugs (Providence Police Dept., Annual Report, 1991). Providence accounts for 25 percent of the state's alcohol treatment admissions and 31 percent of drug treatment admissions.

The following information in the next two tables was obtained from the 1993 Rhode Island Adolescent Substance Abuse Survey, Office of Health Statistics of the Rhode Island Department of Health:

Substance Abuse, Providence Adolescents Grades 7-12

(all figures in percent)

	Providence	*Rhode Island*
Students responding to survey as percentage of total school enrollment	56.5	78.7
Percentage of respondents who:		
Are current smokers	5.6	11.4
Drank any alcohol in past month	43.7	46.1
Got drunk 2 or more times in the past month	8.0	10.9
Used marijuana in past month	11.3	12.3
Sniffed inhalants in past month	5.3	6.1
Used crack in past month	1.1	1.3
Used cocaine in past month	1.2	1.3
Used hallucinogens in past month	4.4	5.6
Used one or more substances in past month (not including cigarettes or alcohol)	22.7	24.6
Came to school a few times or often under the influences of drugs or alcohol in the past 3 months	5.7	6.7
Friends would approve if used marijuana regularly	9.4	7.3
Friends would approve if tried cocaine or crack once or twice	4.6	2.8

Substance Abuse Rates of 8th Grade Students

Providence, State and Nation Compared, 1993

	Providence	*Rhode Island*	*United States*
Any alcohol use in the past month	43.9	40.8	26.2
Been drunk in the past month	14.2	15.0	7.8
Ever smoked cigarettes	31.0	37.6	45.3
Used smokeless tobacco daily	0.4	0.6	1.5
Used steroids in past year	2.9	2.2	0.9
Used cocaine in past year	1.6	1.1	0.4
Used marijuana in past year	1.2	7.3	5.1
Used inhalants in the past year	5.8	7.4	5.4
Used hallucinogens in past year	3.9	4.0	1.2

In addition to the Mayor's Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, which has primary responsibility for education programs aimed at raising awareness and preventing substance abuse in Providence, the State of Rhode Island provides a number of prevention programs that are coordinated through the Department of Substance Abuse. Many of these programs are conducted in cooperation with local schools and police departments.

The Rhode Island Department of Substance Abuse has the responsibility of channeling federal and state funds to state and local substance abuse treatment programs. Services at the Department's Benjamin Rush facility include detoxification, out-patient counseling, and methadone maintenance, as well as services to patients infected with the HIV virus and pregnant women who are addicted to drugs. Other programs supported through the Department of Substance Abuse include intervention, treatment, and voluntary self-help programs that are administered by private, nonprofit agencies.

Voices from the Community

Substance Abuse was rated lowest among all twelve policy areas for people during the baseline assessment by *ProVision* participants. Youth Development, which many people relate closely to drug abuse prevention, was given the second lowest ranking.

Sentiments expressed most often about the issue of substance abuse by the Community Task Force on Substance Abuse:

- Treatment on demand is needed.
- There needs to be more credentialed, bi-lingual, minority substance abuse counselors and other substance abuse professionals in the field.
- In general, there must be better outreach about prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation throughout the city, especially to minority communities.
- There needs to be better coordination between state and local agencies' programs and dollars spent in order to cut out waste.
- Drug offenders are sent to jail with punishment being the primary objective, rather than rehabilitation and treatment.
- The "war on drugs" is not effective. The problem must be dealt with as a health issue.
- There needs to be a better understanding on the part of the "non-user" as to why the "user" becomes addicted to substances.

"Drugs can kill. If you do weed, then you feel very weird. Crack can destroy your whole mind. Don't pick up needles, and don't put the needle point anywhere on your body. . . . All kinds of drugs can kill you if you don't know that. Officer Joe told us not to do drugs, or if you do, to stay away from the good people with your diseases."

— Reana, Age 11

"When you choose drugs, your choices are over. You have two consequences: jail or death. My son got both."

— A mother

"Mothers who have addictions are afraid to get treatment. They fear their children will be taken away."

— Public housing resident

Strategies

1. ***Prevention through education must be the cornerstone of the community's approach to substance abuse.*** Providence must openly confront the city's drug problems and forge pro-active policies which emphasize prevention before prosecution. At the heart of this is the need to develop an awareness about substance abuse as a public health problem. If our community understands the reasons why abusers become hooked, we are more likely to deal sympathetically and constructively with those in need.

Next Steps

- Improve the quality and representativeness of substance abuse counselors. We must address the needs and concerns of all people with highly skilled and knowledgeable counselors. Counseling centers in partnership with the state should make a comprehensive effort to educate more bilingual and minority substance abuse counselors and professionals and recruit counselors both in- and out-of-state through a targeted recruitment program. Multi-cultural awareness and sensitivity training for substance abuse professionals must be incorporated into training for prevention, since the reasons for drug use and abuse often have in deeper social and cultural roots.
- Create a substance abuse counseling core program in the city's Public Service Academy program in the high schools. Provide incentives which should include scholarship programs for bi-lingual/minority students wishing to pursue this profession.
- Educate the community at large about the realities of substance abuse as a public health problem to generate community responsibility and concern. Schools, health agencies and police departments should make education a priority in all strategies to combat substance abuse. There must be widespread knowledge about specific treatment and rehabilitation programs and the support recovering addicts need from the community.
- Work towards classifying substance abuse as an illness and treating it as a public health issue across all government and public health agencies. Classification of substance abuse as a public health issue would make abusers eligible for medical disability and provide more funding for treatment.

2. ***Make treatment on demand available to everyone who needs it.*** Once the abuser makes up his or her mind to seek help, there must be facilities immediately available to help. This requires a basic expansion of services and beds available in treatment centers. In conjunction with this, better coordination and communication among service agencies (shelters, community centers, etc.) for referral and treatment must be established to avoid duplication of services.

Next Steps

- Increase the number of beds available for substance abuse treatment so that treatment is available on demand. Special attention should be given to facilities that treat women, children and people with limited English proficiency.
- Reduce the regulatory and funding barriers from the government that limit the scope and flexibility of treatment and prevention programs. For example neither Drug Free Schools money nor HUD grants for Providence Housing Authority drug education

programs can be used for drug rehabilitation. Student Assistance Program counselors are not allowed to undertake treatment or counseling in Providence high schools or middle schools.

3. ***Connect rehabilitation programs to comprehensive social services to break the cycle of dependency.*** Abusers must be supported in all aspects of their lives for their treatment to be successful. Our system of dealing with substance abusers must strike a balance between punishment and treatment so that drug abusers have an opportunity to move out of incarceration and into productive and meaningful lifestyles. Many people undergoing rehabilitation need affordable housing and jobs, for example. These supports need to be available in conjunction with drug rehabilitation treatment.

   - Expand drug abuse education and prevention programs in schools, especially through Child Opportunity Zones. These programs should include parents as well as children.
   - The Department of Corrections should restructure its policy on drug offenders. Currently, drug abusers are incarcerated but not sent into a treatment program; drugs are readily available in jail. Without treatment, the problem is not solved and no rehabilitation takes place. Department of Corrections officials and staff need to be educated about drug abuse as a health issue. Treatment programs should be put into place on site. When inmates are incarcerated, substance abusers should be identified and sent into treatment programs.

Assets/Opportunities

Rhode Island Department of Substance Abuse provides resources including educational materials, statistical information, etc.; grants; and referral services through local agencies. It assists the RI Council on Alcoholism and other Drug Dependence with an annual listing of substance abuse treatment and prevention services in the city and statewide.

Drug and Alcohol Treatment Association provides training for substance abuse professionals and agencies, makes concerted outreach into minority communities; and provides cultural sensitivity training.

Governor's Justice Commission provides flexible funding to organizations linking their work to substance abuse.

Mayor's Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse Neighborhood Empowerment for Prevention Program (NEPP). Through citywide community organizing, NEPP has formed partnerships with neighborhood youth, residents, businesses and neighborhood organizations emphasizing prevention.

Capital Hill Interaction Council (CHIC) works with organizations such as Advent House and Traveler's Aid to provide relapse prevention, offering free-of-charge counseling through service agencies.

The Providence Center Substance Abuse Program for Southeast Asians works with the Socio-Economic Development Center for Southeast Asians (SEDC) and the Cambodian Temple to provide culturally appropriate treatment through community agencies working with the Southeast Asian population.

Other programs or facilities that provide substance abuse treatment and preventive services in the Providence area include: Butler Hospital, CODAC II, Family Service Inc., Harvard Community Health Plan, Interfaith Counseling Center, Junction Human Service Corp., MAP, Marathon House, Project LINK, Providence Center, RI Family Court, Roger Williams Medical Center, St. Joseph's Hospital, Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Unit, South Providence Addiction Center, Talbot Treatment Centers, The Center, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Vietnam Era Veterans Association.

The Smith Hill Center K.I.D.S. Curriculum

The K.I.D.S. Curriculum, (Kids Informed Decision Skills), is a school-based substance abuse program designed and run by the Smith Hill Center in Providence. It was recently both nominated for consideration as a model program by the Council of State Governments and rated among the top 17 prevention programs of 370 nationwide entries by the Innovations Awards/Transfer Program. These praises recognize that since its creation in 1984, the K.I.D.S. Curriculum has been an effective and creative way to positively affect changes in attitude, self-worth, and school and family relationships.

The curriculum of this eight-week program, implemented in Camden Elementary School, Nathanael Greene Middle School and Camp Phoenix, emphasizes learning through role-playing and discussions. Students keep journals, which help them express their views about the program as well as better understand its goals, and are presented with "real life" situations such as confronting a friend or parent who is drunk driving. These exercises are only two among many

which are tailored to meet the individual needs of each student by accounting for academic, ethnic, and socio-economic differences. With the K.I.D.S. Curriculum, youths learn how to resist peer pressure, how to respect their body and mind, and learn the negative short and long-term effects of drugs. ■

Neighborhood Empowerment For Prevention Project

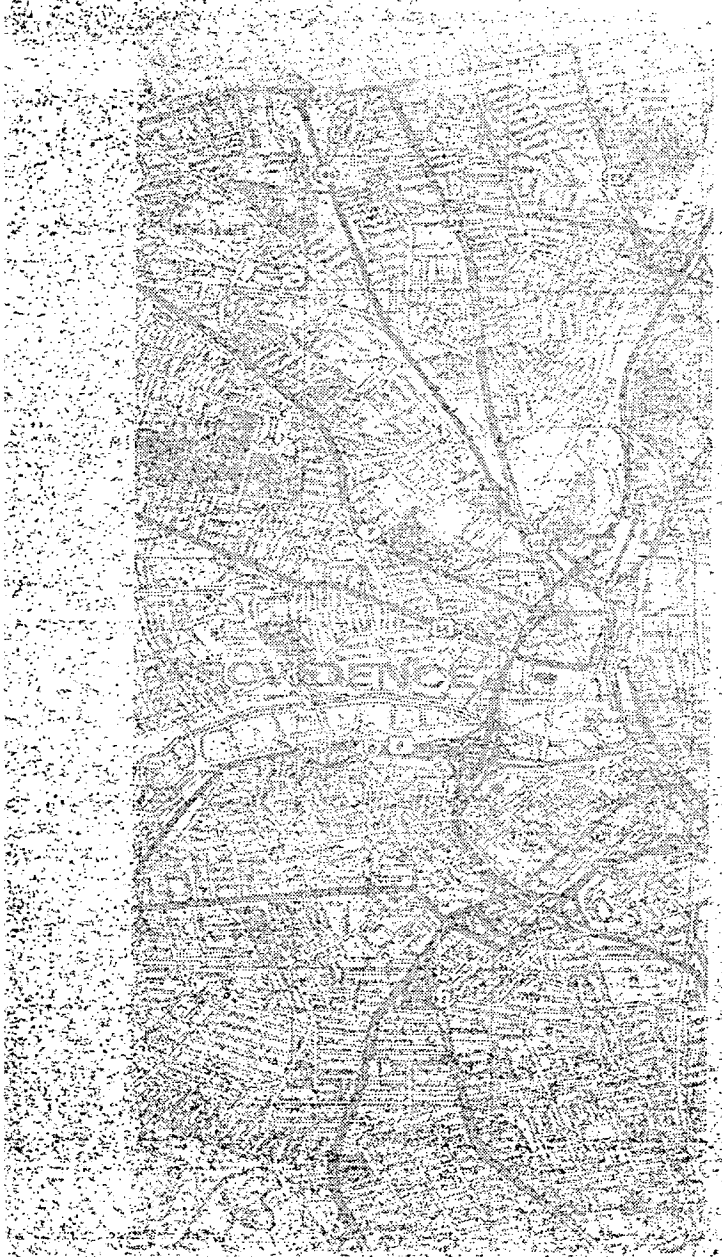
The Neighborhood Empowerment for Prevention Project (NEPP) is a five year, $3.1 million substance abuse prevention project funded by the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Administered by the Mayor's Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, the NEPP is a partnership made up of neighborhood residents, organizations and businesses working together toward eliminating neighborhood deterioration caused by alcohol and other drug abuse. With the support of community organizers, Substance Abuse Prevention Task Forces (SAPTFs) have been developed in every neighborhood throughout Providence. The project provides technical assistance, outreach and events coordinating, and assistance and training of neighborhood residents to empower them to change their lives and improve their own communities.

Neighborhood residents on SAPTFs worked with other concerned neighbors to develop a plan of action to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. They have provided city officials with valuable input on policies including housing, safety, beautification and substance abuse prevention. Collectively, SAPTFs form a citywide network of concerned neighbors who are empowered to change conditions and attitudes concerned with alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse in Providence.

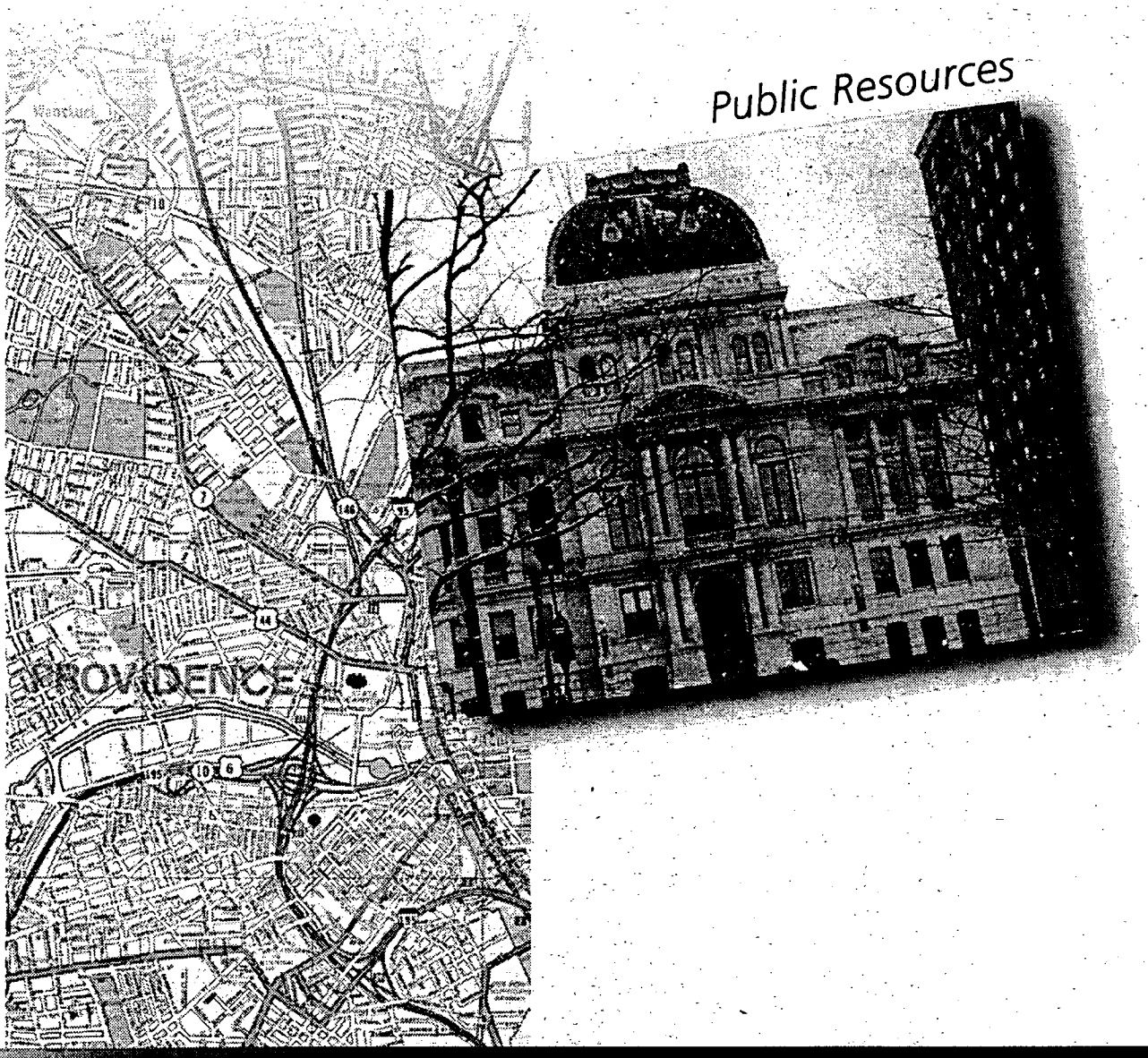
The NEPP has outstationed community organizers to assist the SAPTFs with events, collections, advocacy and community relations. They coordinate citywide adult volunteer groups and business support groups where small and large businesses can donate materials, food, and time. The volunteers disseminate information and answer the questions of neighborhood residents by phone and door to door. They organize events and make presentations at centers and to gatherings, particularly gatherings of school age children.

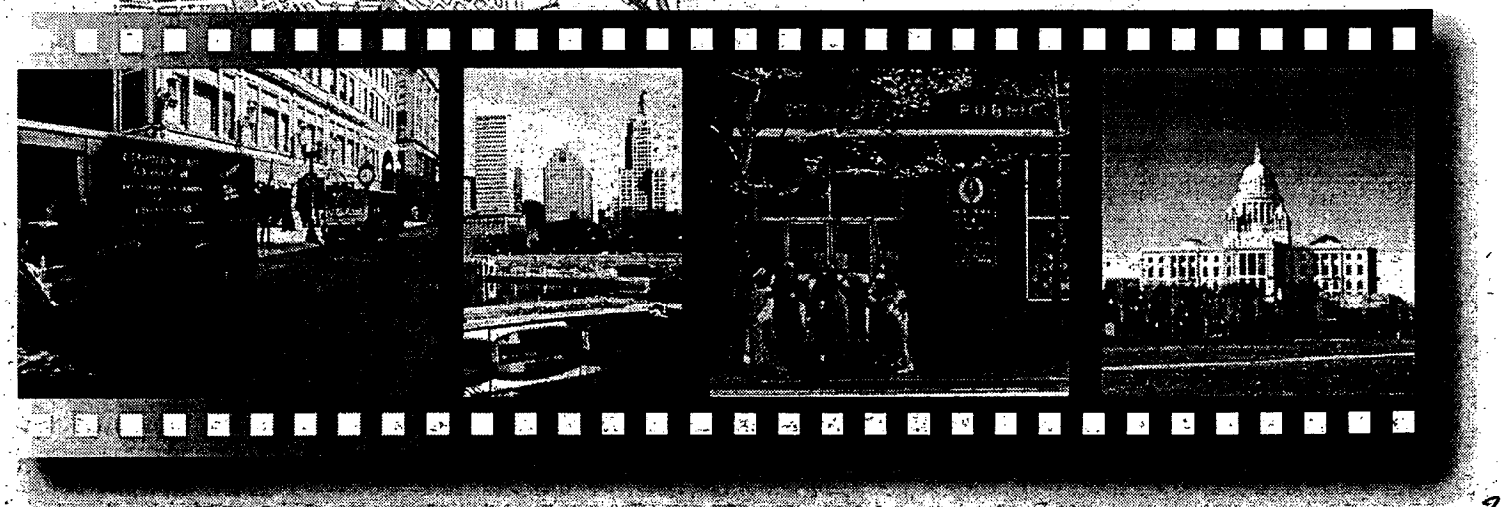
Community service and neighborhood resident volunteers also work in collaboration with a neighborhood organizer, the team leader and the project director, to recruit young volunteers and build a citywide youth volunteer base. These volunteers are given opportunities to participate in various activities, including anti-graffiti painting, neighborhood clean-ups, focus groups, informational forums, and school events. By channeling young people into positive and constructive community-oriented activities, NEPP hopes to empower them as pro-active agents of community development. ■

Part IV ***Assets and Resources***



Public Resources





Chapter 18
Public Resources

Proposed Use of Enterprise Community Social Services Block Grant Funds

The information provided in previous chapters has made it clear that Providence has assembled an impressive array of resources to help guide its future development. In this chapter, we propose to review those resources in more detail, but before doing so it is important to emphasize one resource that may be more important than any other: community consensus. During the past two years, in the work of several study commissions, in the deliberations of the Mayor and his professional advisors, and in the conversations and arguments of hundreds of citizens engaged in the *ProVision* process described earlier, the people of Providence have come to a widely shared understanding of what our problems are and what we should do about them. As we move ahead to attack these problems in the neighborhoods designated as our enterprise community, therefore, we will be proceeding with confidence that we are politically united, with no major disagreements between citizens and officials or between various neighborhood and civic organizations. This is not to say that we are agreed on everything, or that disagreements about priorities no longer exist or will not develop in the future. But we as a community have talked these issues out, we have listened, we have learned, and we are ready to move on together. This is a resource of no small public significance.

As discussed in chapter 3, five major themes emerged out of the community-based strategic planning process used in the preparation of Providence's Enterprise Community application. They include the following:

1. **Improve the quality of the quality of the community's educational system**. Activities directed at this objective should promote increased parental involvement, strong incentives for children to remain in school, higher expectations for student performance, and the need to recognize cultural diversity in our schools and communities. Task force participants also acknowledged the importance of broadening education beyond the elementary and secondary grades. In addition to conventional higher education alternatives, these should include life-long learning with options such as adult education, literacy and language programs, and worker training and retraining. Participants also emphasized the importance of recognizing schools as neighborhood and community resource centers.
2. **Strengthen and Broaden the City's Economic Base**. Second to education, citizen participants cited a strong and diversified economic base as a key attribute of a livable Providence. Good jobs with livable wages were often cited as evidence. Many also pointed out the importance of growing our own jobs through efforts to assist small businesses and foster a greater entrepreneurial spirit in Providence. Key assets for building a stronger local economy were the city's health and educational institutions, its arts, culture and entertainment industry, and its historic character. Participants also acknowledged that despite significant job loss, the city still has a fairly large manufacturing base.

3. **Strengthen Linkages Between Schools, Employment and Training Programs, and the Business Community**. A key theme that emerged out of the "integration" sessions held near the end of the planning process was the need to strengthen relationships between schools, training programs, and employers to foster a more integrated school-to-work transition. ProVision participants noted the current system of programs and services was too fragmented and that too often youth and young adults fell out of the system.
4. **Strengthen Linkages Between Schools and the Community**. The public schools were cited by many planning participants as the single most important institution affecting the future of Providence. In particular, there is strong interest and support for comprehensively linking education, health, and human services in a manner that is locally determined through a collaboration of school officials, parents, community leaders, and businesses.
5. **Neighborhoods Should Have More Control Over Their Own Destinies**. Many strategic planning participants noted that it is important for community-based organizations to play a prominent role in program design, program implementation, and program evaluation. These groups are important assets to their neighborhoods and can play a critical role in mobilizing and coordinating the various public and private resources that need to be tapped to promote sustainable communities.

In addition to these broad themes that emerged through the community-based strategic planning process, the choices Providence has made concerning the allocation of Enterprise Community funds were driven by several criteria developed by citizen participants in the *ProVision* planning process. These include

- EC funds should be used for programs and activities that are consistent with the vision outlined in the strategic plan
- EC funds should be used to leverage funds/resources from additional sources
- EC funds should be used in a manner that promotes reuse of funds
- EC funds should promote coalitions and collaborations at the neighborhood level
- EC funds should be concentrated to achieve maximum impact in specific neighborhoods
- EC funds should not be used for programs and activities that have sufficient alternative sources of support
- EC funds should promote innovation
- EC funds should be evaluated through performance benchmarking of all activities

As described in more detail below, these choices present a significant opportunity for Providence and Rhode Island to capitalize on the extensive study, debate and discussion that has occurred over the past couple of years regarding education, human services, employment and training, and economic development, as well as other program areas. The choices made regarding the use of Enterprise Community funds are an effort to effectuate change and demonstrate new and innovative ways of involving citizens in program formulation, design, implementation, and evaluation. Most importantly, they provide a bridge to action which will demonstrate that the key resources needed to solve Providence's problems are right here in our own community.

Providence proposes to use its Enterprise Community funds in four key programmatic areas:

1. Job Creation	$1,000,000
2. Neighborhood Economic Development	$650,000
3. Workforce and Enterprise Training	$650,000
4. Education	$600,000
5. Administration	$100,000

While the choices reflected in our proposed use of Enterprise Community funds are based on the themes that emerged from the community-based strategic planning process, it is important to emphasize that Providence and Rhode Island have mobilized significant resources of their own in housing, education, economic development, and community policing, to name but a few, to complement these proposed Enterprise Community program activities by providing safe neighborhoods and the physical investment needed to provide a solid foundation for sustainable community development.

Proposed Enterprise Community Activities

I. Job Creation **1,000,000**

Medical Enterprise Zones *$1,000,000*

The primary conclusion of the Needs for the Nineties report, summarized in chapter 2, was that the single greatest problem facing Rhode Island families and individuals was the lack of income. The report, and the Needs for the Nineties Commission that was subsequently formed to make recommendations based on the study's conclusions, acknowledged the importance of employment.

More important, the report pointed out the need for extending support services to allow dependent families and individuals to not only enter the labor force, but to move through the labor force until they reach economic self sufficiency. Unfortunately, in today's economy, having a job is not enough to get by. Many who leave welfare for work find that they can not subsist on jobs that pay $6.00 an hour, which was the average wage reported for participants placed in the state's Pathways to Independence Program. AFDC recipients who leave welfare for work lose the support services they depend on: medical care, free or subsidized child care, transportation assistance, and housing assistance.

To enable the transition from welfare to work, the Needs for the Nineties model requires an extension of support services to a minimum of three to five years to allow individuals to enter the labor force and upgrade their status to higher paying jobs through experience, and additional education and training.

The proposed Medical Enterprise Program is an ambitious and innovative effort to test this model in Providence's poorest neighborhood, relying on a broad-based public/private partnership that includes Rhode Island and Women and Infants hospitals, the United Way of Southeastern New England, the Human Resource Investment Council, The Providence Plan, local foundations, a variety of community-based social service agencies, and city and state government agencies.

To implement the initiative, the South Providence Development Corporation (SPDC), a nonprofit 501(c)3 corporation will be created and governed by a 15-member board of directors that includes eight representatives of the funding partners or their designees, the city council person and state legislator that represent the area, one appointment each from the Governor and the Mayor, and three individuals who live or work in the neighborhood who have demonstrated leadership, involvement, and commitment to South Providence.

The long-term goal of this initiative is to improve the quality of life for residents of South Providence. Specifically, the initiative is designed to create and/or identify meaningful employment opportunities for area residents, thereby decreasing the number of welfare recipients and the unemployed. Comprehensive and integrated support services for the targeted population coordinated by the SPDC will facilitate the enrollees' development into productive, self-sustaining citizens. The underlying philosophy of this initiative is that the most basic and critical requirement for self sufficiency is consistent, meaningful employment and, without such, energies expended to provide various health and human services are used inefficiently. This program, which combines education, training, health, and human services with new economic opportunities has the potential to make a significant impact on the quality of life of South Providence residents. In addition, coordination of physical development and capital investment activities undertaken in conjunction with these efforts will result in a visible rebuilding of one of Providence's most distressed neighborhoods.

This EC-funded activity seeks to create a medical enterprise zone whereby a critical mass of funds committed from a unique public/private partnership are targeted to residents residing within the zone's boundary, which includes portions of Upper and Lower South Providence, two of the city's most severely distressed neighborhoods. According to the 1990 census, these neighborhoods have the highest unemployment rates (18.5% and 20.0% respectively) of all neighborhoods in the Providence. Upper South Providence had the highest percentage of families below poverty (47.3%) while Lower South Providence ranked 4th in the city at 30.1

percent. Similar statistics exist for the percent of persons, children, and elderly below poverty. The zone also includes Rhode Island Hospital, the largest private employer in Rhode Island, which employs about 8,000 people. The project has both human and physical investment aspects, and will proceed in a series of phases.

The first phase will concentrate on creating employment opportunities for zone residents within the hospitals and medical offices located within the medical complex. Unlike many economic opportunity programs that begin with education and training and then hope to successfully place graduates, this initiative begins with the commitment of a job. Rhode Island Hospital and Women and Infants Hospital have pledged to hire 25 zone residents during the first year and 35 during the second year. As the mechanics of the initiative are worked out, other employers within the zone—both new and existing businesses—will be asked to join in the initiative by making a similar commitment to hire from within the neighborhood. The goal of this project is to have hired 250 Enterprise Community residents by the end of the fifth program year. The second phase of the project will include a series of physical investments, both new construction and rehabilitation, designed to create new employment opportunities for area residents in the medical and health care fields, and in retail and personal/business services needed to support the resident and working population in the area.

Target Population. The target population will be residents of Providence's Enterprise Community (with special emphasis in the area in South Providence defined by Eddy, Thurbers, Prairie, and Point Streets) who experience barriers to economic opportunity and self-sufficiency. Specifically, these individuals include high school drop-outs, ex-offenders, individuals with limited English speaking abilities, individuals with poor or obsolete work skills, the unemployed, low-income single mothers, the physically and/or mentally disabled, and recovering substance abusers.

Investing in People. Three mechanisms will be used to identify qualified individuals. Various state agencies maintain databases containing demographic information on the above populations, including those who are unemployed and receiving benefits from entitlement programs. In addition, supportive work programs administered through the state's Pathways to Independence and the Regional Employment and Training Board's Rhode Island Supportive Work programs will be used for initial placements and upgrading. Second, door to door canvassing of every household in the defined area may also be used to survey residents to determine their employment needs, social and human service requirements, and interest in participating in the initiative. Third, the hospitals and the SPDC will partner with community-based agencies, such as the Urban League and Dorcas Place, for assistance on how best to contact and involve the target population.

Once identified, each participant will receive a Skills Assessment to determine what work skills training is necessary, if any, including literacy, language, and technical skills training. The assessment will be based on SCANS, which is an outcome based assessment process that focuses on five workplace competencies and three foundation skills which are required in all workplaces. Each client will also receive a Social Services Needs Assessment to determine the extent to which support services must be arranged. Support services that will be made available to clients will include transportation, affordable housing, health care, and senior and child day care services. Special attention will be given to homes where substance abuse and domestic violence are in evidence.

Based on the review of current and potential new job opportunities, a data base will be created to identify labor needs and skill requirements. Two categories of individuals will be developed. Category I would include those whose skill-level and work readiness meet the employment requirements and qualifies them for immediate placement (no formal training is necessary). Category II would include those who require some sort of job and/or language training and development.

The SPDC will contract with a limited number of community-based social service agencies located within the zone to provide the necessary support services. For example, training can be provided by the Community College of Rhode Island and the Urban League. Literacy training could be provided by Dorcas Place. Housing development can be managed through SWAP (Stop Wasting Abandoned Property) and Omni Development Corporation. Transportation will be managed through a van service, and perhaps stimulate the creation of new

community-based mobility businesses to supplement and coordinate with existing transportation services. Day care services, which may be the single greatest need, will be provided through existing neighborhood centers. Each client will have access to a primary care provider for their health care needs. In many cases, health care coverage will be provided through the state's Rite Care program (see chapter 16 for further description). Rhode Island Hospital and Women and Infants Hospital will serve as the major provider of these services.

Recognizing that many unforeseen barriers and/or crises may hinder an individual's ability to maintain employment and advance through the labor market, each client will have access to a case manager. The case manager will provide the consistency, stability and personal support necessary to address and overcome potential barriers to economic self sufficiency. A Case Management Coordinator will work with the case managers of the community organizations and state agencies to assure continuity of services.

Each employer will be required to pay a sliding scale wage to the client starting at a percentage of fair market value and increasing over a five-year period when the client's wage will be fully paid by the employer. The employer will also agree to provide time for professional development counseling and job training. Once the mechanics of the program are working smoothly, the SPDC will inventory existing businesses in the area to obtain additional commitments to hire EC zone residents.

Investing in Places. Subsequently, the SPDC will work with other public, private, and nonprofit agencies, including the Minority Investment Development Corporation, the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development, the Department of Planning and Development, and other agencies to identify potential new businesses that would be interested in locating in South Providence and participating in the medical enterprise zone. While the initial recruitment would focus primarily on medical and health services, efforts will also be made to diversify the economic base by adding retail, services, and manufacturing establishments within the zone as well. Incentives that will be used to stimulate investment include tax-exempt private facility bonds and assistance available through city and state economic development programs, including Rhode Island's state enterprise zone program.

The Providence Plan Housing Corporation will also complement these activities by targeting activities in a South Providence Focus area. Abandoned housing will be acquired and rehabilitated to provide home ownership opportunities for low and moderate income families living in the neighborhood. In addition to the down payment, closing cost, and second mortgage assistance provided to the home buyers, renters in the neighborhood will benefit through an increase in the number of quality units, as well as limits on the rent levels that assisted home owners can charge. Providence is also making a special request for an additional 150 project based Section 8 certificates, to be earmarked for rental units created in formerly abandoned housing with priority given to participants in the SPDC training programs.

Matching Funds. Participating entities in this initiative include Rhode Island Hospital and Women and Infants Hospital; the former has pledged $500,000 to this project and the latter may commit as much as $250,000 over a five-year period. Other potential funding sources include the Public/Private Partnership Grants program created to implement Needs for the Nineties funded by the United Way of Southeastern New England ($200,000) and the Human Resources Investment Council ($500,000). A local foundation has also expressed interest in the project and may commit $100,000 a year to the project.

EC funds in the amount of $1.0 million are being committed to this project. The EC funds would be used primarily to provide skills and needs assessments, and education, training, and support services to participating clients. It is anticipated that these funds will be used primarily for child care. The initiative seeks to employ 25 households in the first year and to increase the number of households employed by 50 each year, reaching a cumulative total of 250 by the end of the fifth year. Additional households will be enrolled in education and training programs in the early years of the program to prepare for their eventual employment. Finally, the Medical Enterprise Zone will have an evaluation component that will examine both process and impact issues, enabling the determination of best practices and lessons learns that can be transferred to other zones within the Enterprise Community boundaries in subsequent years.

II. Neighborhood Economic Development $650,000

2a. Small Business Development Center *$150,000*

One of the central themes that emerged out of the community-based strategic planning process was the need for greater marketing, outreach, and coordination of services available to small businesses. This theme was also prominent in the focus groups we conducted with small businesses. To address these needs, Providence will allocate $150,000 in Enterprise Community funds to the Small Business Development Center to enhance the services it provides to the small business community in Providence.

The Small Business Development Center is a joint project between the U.S. Small Business Administration and Bryant College, with additional support from the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development. Its main office is located at Bryant College (Smithfield, RI) and includes other sites across the state, including an office in downtown Providence. The SBDC provides a variety of technical support services to small businesses, including counseling and loan application preparation, how to develop good credit as a foundation for a workable business plan, and training in skills such as marketing, management, pricing, and inventory control. SBDC also administers a women- and minority-owned business program, designed to increase the number of such businesses in Rhode Island. Overall, while minorities make up about 10 percent of the state's population, less than 0.5 percent of the companies in Rhode Island are minority-owned.

EC funds will be used to further augment and increase the SBDC's women- and minority-owned business program, by providing assistance to the SBDC's Providence office to expand its outreach, counseling, and technical assistance programs to EC zone businesses and to businesses outside the zone that predominantly employ EC zone residents.

Lead Entity: Small Business Development Center

Other funding: SBA, $378,000; Bryant College, $345,000; RI Department of Economic Development, $140,000; Hospital Trust National Bank, $100,000.

2b. Small Business Loans and Technical Assistance for Minority Enterprises *$200,000*

A coalition of bankers, business people, and community leaders has formed to encourage minority entrepreneurship, and strengthen existing minority businesses. The Minority Investment Development Corporation, a private, for-profit organization that was formed in January 1994 to invest in and lend to minority businesses in Rhode Island. A 1992 study estimated that there are 325 minority-owned firms in Rhode Island, with more than $100 million in sales and $64 million in assets. Overall, these firms account for 1800 full-time and 780 part-time jobs. A recent survey of minority businesses found that their top problem was access to startup capital, with more than half of the respondents indicating that they were seeking additional financing.

MIDC seeks to raise $4.0 million in capital, and to date, has already raised $1.5 million from the state's three largest banks ($500,000 each from Fleet, Hospital Trust, and Citizens banks) and is currently seeking to raise a total of $2.5 million from the state's smaller banks, private corporations, and foundations. In May 1994, MIDC made loans to five companies, totaling $365,000, including a loan to a Providence bistro owned by African Americans and micro loans to a Providence African American electrical contractor and a Providence Asian molding firm.

In addition to providing a source of capital, MIDC intends to provide a variety of services to the minority business community, including technical assistance in accounting, marketing, and operations. MIDC will also serve as a referral to other training and support services provided by existing business assistance organizations, such as the Small Business Development Center.

MIDC will also have a nonprofit subsidiary, the Rhode Island Coalition for Minority Investment (RICMI). The nonprofit component of MIDC will provide technical support to businesses not yet ready to access private

capital, as well as possibly administering some Small Business Administration programs. EC funds will be used to provide technical assistance and to help capitalize a revolving loan fund that will be administered by RICMI. The EC funds will be targeted to minority businesses in Providence's Enterprise Community and to minority businesses outside the EC zone that employ EC zone residents.

Lead Entity: Minority Investment Development Corporation

Potential Matching Funds: Banks, minority businesses.

2c. Small Business and Microlending Program *$100,000*

One of the most important needs entrepreneurs face in starting a new business is access to capital. This is especially true for small businesses, where the principals may not have an established credit rating. In addition, banks are generally reluctant to make these types of direct loans as their costs may exceed their return and they tend to be riskier than more conventional loans. To fill this credit gap by making capital accessible to small businesses in inner city neighborhoods, community development corporations have begun to provide loans to small businesses and to micro-enterprises. The latter are generally home-based businesses that start with an idea of an individual seeking to become economically self-sufficient, such as a recently laid-off worker or a mother on welfare. These loans typically are for very small amounts, some as low as a couple of hundred dollars, and are often used to purchase a piece of equipment such as a sewing machine or a personal computer to get the business started.

Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services, founded in 1980 primarily as a housing rehabilitation, construction, and technical assistance organization, is the only local community development corporation in Rhode Island that administers a small business commercial loan program and also operates the state's first and only micro loan program. It is also a national leader among Neighborhood Housing Service organizations in linking housing with economic development.

The commercial loan program provides limited financing to store owners who could not obtain conventional financing for repairs, expansion or modernization. A revolving loan fund was established in 1980, which since has approved eight loans for $70,500. Commercial loans have been provided to a new car wash, an ethnic chicken and pizza store, a temporary hiring service, a laundry, and the owners of two commercial buildings that have rented to two new businesses—a minority-owned restaurant/ice cream store and a beauty supply firm.

Based on the successful peer lending model made famous in Bangladesh, Elmwood NHS' micro loan program currently has six peer groups with 30 home-based entrepreneurs who have received $12,500 in first-stage loans. Loans start at $300 and can, in a series of stages, reach a maximum of $10,000.

Each peer group, which ranges in number from four to seven, is responsible for the loans given to other peer group participants. To date there have been only two bad loans, both of which were first-stage loans under $2,000, and the peer members are making small payments on each while seeking redress. The micro loan procedures freeze all loan activity in a group until all arrearage is dealt with. As a result of those two micro non-payments, a policy change was instituted in which even small loans are being collateralized and equipment purchases are more closely tracked. Current activities assisted through the micro lending program include computer services, day care, catering, construction, clothing design and retail sales of clothing and fish.

The commercial loan program is limited to the Elmwood neighborhood and the micro lending program is currently active in the Elmwood neighborhood and the four poor neighborhoods that border Elmwood (the West End, Upper South Providence, Lower South Providence, and Washington Park). All but Washington Park are included within the boundaries of Providence's Enterprise Community. Elmwood NHS officials estimate that the two lending programs have collectively increased local jobs by more than 50 in a neighborhood that has an unemployment rate substantially higher than either the state or the city.

EC funds will be used to provide additional funds to the commercial loan and micro lending programs to expand the number of business that can be assisted.

Lead Entity: Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services

Matching Funds: Banks, private businesses

2d. Industrial Competitiveness Program *$200,000*

As chapter 4 pointed out, small manufacturing companies are a vital component of Rhode Island's economy. Rhode Island has the highest percentage of manufacturing companies with less than 100 employees among all six New England states. To prevent further hemorrhaging of Rhode Island's manufacturing base, which lost 18,000 jobs between 1987 and 1991, an Industrial Competitiveness Council, consisting of Narragansett Electric Company, the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Fleet Bank, Hospital Trust National Bank and Citizens Bank, was formed in 1993 to evaluate the needs of small and medium-sized manufacturers in Rhode Island and to develop a sustainable program that would assist these companies to improve their competitiveness in the market place. The project was conducted in two phases, with the first identifying target industries, conducting a needs assessment, establishing benchmarking indicators for critical activities and processes, developing guidelines for improvement programs, and assessing the training and resource needs of 20 companies included in a pilot competitiveness study. The second phase included a review of existing programs and resources and led to the recommendation that an industrial competitiveness program be established.

With the assistance of Arthur D. Little, Inc., the Industrial Competitiveness Council identified four key industries that must be strengthened in order to revitalize Rhode Island's manufacturing base and prevent the further loss of jobs in this sector. These are: plastics, tools and dies, instrumentation, and jewelry. Each of these sectors has experienced significant job loss over the past decade.

Program Overview. At its June 3, 1993 meeting, the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce approved such a program and authorized a $1.0 million fund raising campaign for the program over a three-year period. The principal purpose of the industrial competitiveness program is to assist small manufacturers in becoming more competitive by strengthening current practices in four key areas: strategic management, business systems, operations and engineering, and marketing. This is done by comparing a company with those of companies known for their excellence on a variety of performance benchmarking indicators. After completion of the benchmarking analysis, the program assists companies in developing an improvement plan for addressing the deficiencies and areas in need of improvement. In addition, the industrial competitiveness program will provide a comprehensive system that will link small manufacturing firms with the technical assistance and other available resources they need to address identified problem areas and aid them in identifying and understanding the type of assistance they need in order to become more competitive and higher performing work places.

Results of the pilot study of 20 Rhode Island companies indicated that most of the problems identified were related to senior management strategic issues and non-existent or weak business systems. Thus, most of the improvements will not need major capital assistance to finance the acquisition of new technologies, but rather smaller investments in technical assistance and strategic planning and management.

Enterprise Community funds will be used to augment the Industrial Competitiveness Program by providing funds that can be used to increase the number of businesses assisted in Providence. EC funds may also be used to write down the cost of the required company match for EC zone businesses in the targeted industries to encourage their participation. Many of the small manufacturing firms in the targeted industries included in the industrial competitiveness program are located in Enterprise Community neighborhoods and form an important component of the local job base. Because many of these firms are operating on a very narrow margin, they are particularly vulnerable to substantial employment cutbacks and perhaps bankruptcy. Through their participation in the industrial competitiveness program, it is anticipated that these firms will become stronger and more competitive, and ultimately led to increased employment opportunities for EC zone residents.

Lead Entity: Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce

III. Workforce and Enterprise Training $650,000

3a. School-to-Work Workforce Development Center *$150,000*

One of the most prominent themes that emerged out of the community-based strategic planning process was the need to foster and nurture a stronger and more formal link between the schools, employment and training programs, and the private sector. Participants cited a stronger school to work transition as an important contribution the strategic planning process could contribute toward making Providence a more livable community. These views are consistent with and reinforce the efforts of School-to-Work Opportunities Transition Team, created in September 1992 to establish a statewide school-to-work transition program, as well as the City's "Youth Fair Chance" grant application (see chapter 9).

Presently, the current myriad of programs and participants does a poor job of moving youth into and through the labor force. Recent statistics indicate that only 15 students at Central Vocational, a high school that serves predominantly minority and Enterprise Community zone students, were placed with jobs through distributive or cooperative educational efforts during the past year.

Under this program, EC funds would be combined with funds available through the Providence School Department, the Human Resource Investment Council, and the Providence-Cranston Private Industry Council/Regional Employment Training Board, to create a Workforce Development Center serving Central High School and the Central Vocational School. The school-to-work project would be developed under the leadership of the Regional Employment and Training Board.

This center would serve as a labor market intermediary between students and employers, linking students to job openings available at area employers and providing employers with the opportunity to communicate to school officials the types of skills they are most frequently looking for in entry-level positions. SCANS workplace competencies and foundation skills will drive the program design. The center would work with school officials to adapt their curriculum to reflect these needs, and thus, better prepare students to compete in today's job market. The development of this program comes at an opportune time as both Central and Central Vocational high schools have restructured themselves around a cluster concept, making it easier to match private employers with the schools.

Lead Entity: Regional Employment and Training Board

Participating Entities/Potential Matching Funds: Providence School Department, Human Resource Investment Council, private employers.

3b. One Start Shopping for Employment and Training Services *$150,000*

As noted above, there are a myriad number of programs operating in the employment and training field. Prospective clients, particularly those in low-income neighborhoods and those whose primary language is not English, have difficulty in navigating this maze and obtaining the employment and training services they are eligible to receive. Customers seeking assistance to enter or advance through the labor market, face a puzzling array of agencies, programs, and service providers, which make it difficult for customers to access and fully utilize the resources that are available. Further, once reached, customers are often required to provide the same information many times at many different places.

The Rhode Island Skills Commission has taken the lead in promoting "a new comprehensive and coherent employment and training system," which they have called the "Human Investment System," that encourages the development of an integrated services system. One of the primary goals of this new system is to make it easier for customers to enter the employment and training system, have their needs assessed, and be directed to the most appropriate service. This is critically important for two reasons. First, a recent survey of 86 Rhode Island employers in fifteen industry groups conducted by the Rhode Island Occupational Information Coordinating

Committee reported that while many job titles have remained the same, they have changed significantly in skill level and their work content has broadened. Second, skill upgrading is especially important for those already employed as 80 percent of our workers in the year 2000 are already in the labor market. Thus, if individuals are to become economically self-sufficient, they must not only move into the work force through an entry level job, but through the work force into higher paying jobs that will provide for the supports that allow for economic self sufficiency—housing, health care, child care, transportation, and the like.

Program Description. Under the One Start Shopping program, EC funds will be used to provide case managers at the city's multi-purpose community centers with the computer equipment and training they need to link into several statewide on-line systems that will allow them to provide a common entry process for all customers to aid them in finding the most appropriate education, employment, and training services. Under this system there is no sequential path from agency to agency, and there is no "wrong door;" instead, there is a single entry process for all customers that includes a simple, accessible, one-time needs assessment that results in the entry of information at the point of intake that accompanies customers throughout their journey into and through the labor market.

EC funds will be used to purchase personal computers, modems, printers, and software that will allow the case managers stationed in the community centers to tap into statewide on-line systems, including the automated case management system maintained by the Providence/Cranston Job Training Partnership Act agency and the Rhode Island Department of Employment and Training's ALEX system, which provides notices of available job opportunities. In addition, EC funds will provide for the training of the community center case managers on the use of the software, and to conduct workshops and training sessions to build a stronger link between the community centers and the Regional Employment and Training Board. EC funds will also be used to purchase equipment and training for other neighborhood-based social agencies that provide employment and training services.

Lead Entity: Regional Employment and Training Board

Participating Entities: Multipurpose community centers, neighborhood-based agencies that provide employment and training services

Potential Matching Funds: Human Resources Investment Council, Federal School-to-Work grant.

3c. Work-Based Literacy and Language Training *$200,000*

National and state studies of worker skills as well as focus groups conducted with large and small employers as part of the community-based strategic planning process used to prepare Providence' Enterprise Community application indicate that workers must be employable regardless of a specific technical skill or an industry specific job. In the new, mobile workplaces, employability must be transferable from job to job. This requires workers who possess generic workplace literacy skills which include work habits and protocol, and basic computational and reading skills. These skills, along with language, are often barriers that prevent individuals who enter the work force from sustaining their employment, and most important, from advancing to higher paying positions. SCAN competencies for the workplace and foundation skills for workers will provide the essential framework for the training.

These problems are especially critical in Rhode Island, which like other states in the New England Region, have growth rates for racial and minority populations—particularly Asian and Hispanic— that exceed the national average. A recent study of demographic change, education, and the work force in the six New England states by the New England Education Loan Marketing Corporation found that while minorities were entering the workforce in greater numbers their educational attainment lagged significantly behind that of whites. The study pointed out that these trends are likely to continue and accelerate over the near term future, and unless corrected, will have significant economic implications for the region's ability to compete with others to retain and attract employers.

Under the Work-Based Literacy and Language Training program, Enterprise Community funds will be used to provide customized assessment of company training needs and to provide on-site literacy and language training for companies located within the Enterprise Community boundaries or for companies that employ a substantial number of EC zone residents. This program will be built upon a highly successful pilot project For example, during the past year, the Regional Employment and Training Board assisted two traditional jewelry companies in the city's Olneyville neighborhood in acquiring customized on-site needs assessment regarding their training needs. This assessment identified English-as-a-Second Language programs as a key need in order to prevent breakage and spoilage and to increase shop safety. Also, language skills were needed by a number of non- or limited-English proficient workers who had attained middle management positions within the companies but faced limited opportunities for advancement given their weak language and math skills.

Lead Entity: Regional Employment and Training Board.

Participating Entities: EC zone companies, neighborhood-based agencies that provide literacy and language programs.

Potential matching funds: EC zone companies, Human Resource Investment Council, RI Department of Economic Development, RI Department of Education, Carl Perkins and Providence Adult Education funds.

3d. Arts and Artisans Entrepreneurship Training *$150,000*

As noted throughout the strategic planning document, Providence is a city blessed with a vibrant arts and cultural community. As testimony, there are more artists per capita here than in any other city in the United States. Further, Providence ranks third in per capita population of industrial and graphic designers, just behind New York and Los Angeles.

Studies of economic development have demonstrated that where artists pioneer, the economy soon blossoms. Providence is no exception. These artists and artisans live and work in the city's neighborhoods, and an increasing number have shown interest in portions of downtown, particularly the jewelry and foundry districts.

The arts and cultural industry is a growth industry for Providence. Artsworkers have and will continue to play many vital roles in helping to carry out the vision for a more livable Providence. They will create small shops and employ EC zone residents as their businesses grow. Artsworkers will lend their imaginations and process tools to the community-based strategic planning process. Artsworkers will continue to pioneer the revitalization of Providence by adaptively reusing vacant commercial and industrial buildings for residences and studios in neighborhoods and downtown, and in turn, serve as a catalyst for others to invest in the community.

Components of the Arts and Culture Industry. The arts and culture industry can be broken into six major components:

1. *Education and training*, which includes all institutions and organizations that provide academic and technical training in the arts and arts-related fields.
2. *Conceptualization and production*, which represents the original work (ideas and symbols) of the individual artists and designers and those support institutions and businesses that produce their concepts.
3. *Manufacturing*, which encompasses those arts-related businesses that assist in fabricating and producing arts products through the use of specific arts equipment, materials, or technical skills.
4. *Distribution and promotion*, which involves those businesses that transmit the artistic product, concept, or idea to the marketplace, and to the consumer.

5. *Preservation and documentation,* which includes those institutions and agencies whose primary function is to house, protect and perpetuate exemplary representations of various facets of the arts and culture.

6. *Services to the field,* which involves all arts service organizations designed for the express purpose of advocating and organizing the arts and artsworkers.

Program Description. Providence has a rich array of individuals, institutions, and organizations in each of these areas and seeks to capitalize on this asset as an economic development tool. The Arts and Artisans Entrepreneurship Training program is a collaborative effort among the Rhode Island Council of the Arts, the Small Business Development Center, and Organizational Futures, Inc., a private firm located in Providence that specializes in the provision of integrated planning and design services to executives, entrepreneurs, organizations, and communities in North America and Europe.

The purpose of this program will be to assist artists, designers, and artisans to become economically self-sufficient and, in some cases, form small businesses that can employ Enterprise Community zone residents. The types of eligible businesses will include apparel and textile design and fabrication; furniture design; fabrication and related woodworking; ceramics and glass design; graphics design and illustration; jewelry and metals design; industrial design; architecture and landscape architecture; interior design; painting; sculpture; and photography.

An 18-month program will be developed. It will begin by assessing and drawing out basic entrepreneurial traits. Each entrepreneur will be connected with a seasoned mentor and participate in an entrepreneur's support group. Each will learn basic business development skills. Ongoing support and continued access to technical and human resources will be a key feature of the program.

The types of activities to be funded through this program include the following: business training, including the development of a business plan, credit and financial management, marketing and communication, organizational design and management, legal copyright and trademarks, and proposal writing. In addition, the entrepreneurship training program will link participants to other resources to enable them to incorporate and grow as small businesses. Examples of these types of services include access to matching seed or equity funds, micro loan, and small business loan programs. Entrepreneurs will be encouraged to become part of the planned "Arts Mart," where artists and artisans will have studios and small shops where they can sell their work to the public.

In addition to Enterprise Community funds, other funding sources may include the Rhode Island Council of the Arts, the Small Business Development Center, the Rhode Island Human Resource Investment Council, and tuition payments, applied on a sliding scale, from participating artists and artisans.

IV. Child Opportunity Zones $600,000

Community input as expressed through the *ProVision* community-based strategic planning process cited education as the single most important attribute of a more livable Providence in the year 2010 and strongly endorsed the concept of Child Opportunity Zones (COZs) as a means for promoting educational improvement.

The concept of Child Opportunity Zones was introduced in the report of Rhode Island's 21st Century Education Commission, *Educating ALL Our Children* (see chapter 14). COZs are intended to foster comprehensive community coordination of education health and social services to meet the health, social and emotional needs of all children so that they arrive at school ready to learn. Under the COZ initiative, participating local schools engage in a planning process whereby families, teachers, individual school administrators, community leaders, and businesses are given the control to decide what services best meet the needs of the school's children and their families, and to design a "family center" in response to the priorities and needs identified in this process. The Rhode Island Department of Education, as part of its comprehensive school reform initiative, supports the COZ initiative, and along with assistance from the United Way and The Rhode Island Foundation, has provided

planning grants to 20 schools statewide, including the William D'Abate elementary school in Providence, to begin planning for the implementation of the COZ concept.

Enterprise Community funding in the amount of $600,000 will be used to assist the William D'Abate elementary school implement its plan and to allow two other elementary schools in Providence that are ripe for the development of a Child Opportunity Zone to begin planning and implementation. These schools include Camden Avenue in the Smith Hill neighborhood and Gilbert Stuart in the West End neighborhood. Each school has endorsed the COZ concept in their mission statements. Approximately $175,000 in EC funds have been budgeted to each of these three schools. Additional EC funds will be used to provide seed grants to four elementary schools located within the EC boundaries to begin exploration of the COZ concept.

William D'Abate. The William D'Abate elementary school is far along in developing its Child Opportunity Zone. A comprehensive school improvement plan has been underway for five years under the aggressive leadership of the principal and teachers. A COZ planning grant of $60,000 awarded during the current school year has enabled the school to hire a temporary coordinator and assistant to encourage community and parental outreach, undertake a needs and resource assessment, and develop parent and agency leadership councils to work with the school.

Gilbert Stuart Elementary School. The Gilbert Stuart elementary school is in the planning stages of a comprehensive school reform. Located in a neighborhood where four out of ten residents are foreign born and only half of those 25 years or older have a high school degree, Gilbert Stuart stands to benefit immensely through collaboration with the extensive non-profit social service, health and education network in the immediate area of the school. These include the West End Community Center, the Knight Memorial Library, and Dorcas Place, all located within two blocks of the school. Other nearby resources include the Feinstein Public Service High School, the South East Asian Development Center and the International Institute. Gilbert Stuart offers an interesting opportunity to develop a new type of Child Opportunity Zone, one located primarily outside the school building and comprised of a network of key service providers that interact with and surround the school. Preliminary discussions with the Knight Memorial Library have identified space in that facility which could be used for a COZ/family center. By advancing this expanded network model of a Child Opportunity Zone, the process for developing COZs for schools which have physical constraints regarding available space will be explored and tested. Because Gilbert Stuart remains in the preliminary planning stage, EC funding during the first year will be used for planning, needs and resource assessment, and parental and community outreach. Second-year funding will be used to begin program implementation. A COZ coordinator and support staff will be hired to work with the principal and teachers to determine the specific attributes of the COZ model most appropriate for the school.

Camden Avenue Child Opportunity Zone. Camden Avenue School, in the Smith Hill neighborhood of Providence, serves a population that is more than one-third foreign born and has a poverty rate of 30 percent. It is located between the Smith Hill Community Center and the Chad Brown Public Housing complex, one of the city's largest public housing family developments. The school has established strong working relationships with both and has also reached a critical mass in terms of community interest in participating in the school. Like Gilbert Stuart, Camden Avenue is in the preliminary stages of comprehensive school reform. EC funding during the first year will be used for planning, needs and resource assessment and parental and community outreach, with second-year funding used for program implementation.

Comprehensive School Improvement. Four additional elementary schools located within the Enterprise Community boundaries (Carl Lauro, Edmund Flynn, Mary Fogarty, and Sackett Street) will receive small seed grants of $20,000 each to begin to explore comprehensive school improvement through integrating social, health and educational services in a Child Opportunity Zone. These funds will also be used to increase parental and community involvement in the schools.

The Enterprise Community funding opportunity comes at a crucial time for Providence schools given the current climate of state and federal education policy. The state's *21st Century Report* on education places equitable financing based on student poverty and special needs and integrated social services at the head of the education agenda. A recent State Superior Court decision declaring the reliance of school funding on the local property tax unconstitutional adds force to the need for change. This year Providence will receive $19 million in additional state funding to address the needs of low income students, but a final financial restructuring has not been completed.

At the federal level, the Goals 2000 agenda asks states and communities to reform their education systems through the development and implementation of comprehensive improvement plans based on world-class standards and high expectation for all students. Goals 2000 seeks to blend federal, state and local efforts into a cohesive educational approach that will enable all children to attain high standards of performance in the state's core academic subjects. The Child Opportunity Zone concept is aimed at meeting the first of the national education goals, that all children will start school ready to learn.

This spirit of federal, state, local and private collaboration for comprehensive school improvement is at the very essence of the strategy Providence and Rhode Island seek to promote through Child Opportunity Zones. Enterprise Community funds will provide the opportunity to begin implementation of the COZ concept now so that when additional state and federal funds for educational improvement become available, Providence will have the empirical evidence it needs to build on to effectively utilize these new resources in schools throughout the Enterprise Community as well as citywide.

Lead Entity: Providence Public School Department

Matching Funds: Providence School Department, Rhode Island Department of Education (state school aid, federal Goals 2000 grant), local foundations, private companies.

V. Administration $100,000

Providence proposes to keep administrative costs for the implementation of its Enterprise Community-funded activities to a minimum. Leveraging resources and administrative capacity available through the Rhode Island Department of Human Services and The Providence Plan, Providence has allocated $100,000 in Enterprise Community funds for overall program administration. Half of these funds will be awarded to the RI Department of Human Services, the state's lead agency for receipt of Title XX SSBG funds. The Department of Human Services will be the lead fiscal agent for Providence's EC funds and will pass these funds through to the appropriate implementing entities. The Providence Plan will receive the other half of the EC funds in this category and will use those funds to supplement the funds it receives from the state, the city, and other sources to play a convening, and facilitative role regarding monitoring, oversight, and evaluation related to Enterprise Community-funded activities.

Enterprise Community Tax-Exempt Facility Bonds

As discussed more fully below, the City of Providence has a proven track record in the use public programs to promote local economic development. The City successfully secured Urban Development Action Grant and Economic Development Administration grants to leverage tens of millions of dollars of business reinvestment through the 1980's. As an CDBG entitlement community, Providence has been successfully utilizing the HUD Section 108 Guarantee Loan Program since 1989 for a variety of innovative projects.

Richmond Square Business Center. An investment that resulted in the creation of one of the State's most successful technology park's is known as the Richmond Square Technology Center. This project was the first in the State to create a facility specifically designed and marketed for high technology manufacturers. The Center, working closely with Brown University, Rhode Island Hospital and other health and educational institutions offers unique facilities and services, oriented to nurture the growth and incubation of 80 high technology companies for the City. When first built in the mid 1980's the City successfully obtained a $1.2 Million Urban Development Action Grant to assist with the financing of this $5.5 Million project. Since its inception, the technology center has provided an efficient and sophisticated "breeding" ground for many successful entrepreneurial enterprises such as the Nestor Company. Nestor, Inc. was developed after 10 years of research by Dr. Leon Cooper (Nobel Prize Recipient) and Charles Elbaum of Brown University. Their efforts resulted in computerized solutions to previously unsolved pattern recognition problems. Today Nestor is the world's leading supplier of neural network computer systems for commercial applications. The Richmond Square Technology Center is an example of how Providence successfully utilized public incentives, private investment and technology to provide economic opportunity while building a community based partnership.

Requests for Use of Enterprise Community Tax Exempt Private Facility Bonds. Presently, the city has a number of major capital investment projects in various planning phases. As these projects begin to explore financing options, tax exempt private facility bonds will be seriously explored as an option. These projects include the following:

Gorham Employment Center. The City of Providence is working to transform the 37-acre site of the former Gorham manufacturing plant into an industrial park. The necessary improvements include the remediation of all hazardous and toxic materials, building demolition and site improvements. Under an agreement between the City and Textron, Inc., which was entered into on January 10, 1994, Textron, as previous owner, has agreed to assume all costs for clean-up of the soil and ground water contamination and provide up to One Million Dollars for the asbestos remediation.

Once Textron's environmental remediation effort is completed the City plans to undertake necessary improvements to create a marketable site. This will include redesigning and upgrading the site's infrastructure, including utilities and roads; the demolition of many of the existing buildings; and acquisition of abutting real estate to improve site access.

Presently the City is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan for the creation of an employment center for the Gorham site. The Gorham employment center will be fundamentally different from the traditional mixed-use industrial development. The Gorham Employment Center will be designed to provide for the employment needs of Providence's urban neighborhoods.

The Gorham Employment Center's design, occupancy, and operations will be carefully planned to accommodate the changing industrial and manufacturing needs and markets within the region, with environmental protection and enhancement being emphasized.

The Gorham Employment Center will be self-sufficient to the degree that basic employee requirements are provided within its boundaries, while providing an optional environment for a wide range of employee needs. It is anticipated that the development program will achieve the following objectives:

- Comprehensive planning both beyond the periphery of the Gorham site as well as within.
- Joint planning and investment both by public and private sectors.
- Design for optimum efficiency for both employer and employee.
- Provide on site essential services.
- Function as a comprehensive facility, sharing facilities and minimizing redundancy.

- Address social and training issues confronting a changing local workforce.
- Insure compatible operation and uses within the site.
- Emphasize environmental protection and enhancement.

Once developed, the Gorham Employment Center will support a workforce of more than 1,000 individuals, eliminate the blight that this large facility presented in its unimproved condition, and create an environmentally safe industrial park for the neighborhood and business community.

Capitalization of Providence Economic Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund. The Providence Economic Development Loan Program (PEDC), a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt CDC, administered by the City's Department of Planning and Development, provides financial assistance to both large and small commercial and industrial concerns within the City's neighborhoods.

PEDC's program is self-sustaining, drawing its revenue from loan interest payments, with all administrative overhead cost assumed by the Department of Planning and Development. Directed by an eleven (11) member board, PEDC administers a loan portfolio in excess of $6 Million Dollars. Since its inception in 1978, over 300 businesses have received assistance that they would have not qualified for conventionally. In fact, since January of 1991, over 475 new jobs have been created and 657 jobs retained; of the 85 business men and women assisted, 10 have been minority owned and 16 women owned. The program places priority on assisting the City neighborhood commercial precincts in order to maximize neighborhood stability.

A participating business can receive a loan of up to $125,000 with a maximum repayment term of 10 years. Interest rates vary and are based on ability to repay. The PEDC Loan Program has established itself as an important community development tool and has assumed a significant role in helping to stabilize and improve neighborhood business conditions.

It must be noted that the continued success of the PEDC program depends on capitalizing the portfolio. Presently this program secures, through repayment of existing loans, portfolio growth at approximately $ 60,000 per month; this coupled with an additional contribution of $500,000 $700,000 yearly through the City's CDBG Entitlement Program provides the City with a yearly operating budget of between $1.2 - 1.4 Million Dollars. Every dollar of PEDC assistance ordinarily leverages private/bank equity of 2-3 dollars. This results in total program impact of nearly 4 Million Dollars in business investment yearly.

The significant demand for financial help from the City's small business operators cannot presently be met because of insufficient local resources. In light of the City's present inability to meet this need and with an eye toward creating a sustainable environment for business development, the Department of Planning and Development is preparing to apply for a $5 million section 108 Guarantee Loan from HUD which will be utilized to recapitalize the revolving loan fund portfolio.

Port Development. The Providence Industrial Waterfront is the location of many large scale business and facilities of critical importance to the City and region. The Port district provides Providence with deep water access to Narragansett Bay and beyond. Here, at the Providence Industrial Waterfront, trucks, freight trains, tankers and cargo ships converge, transporting an array of raw materials including chemicals, petroleum products, lumber, cement gypsum and paper. Tank trucks line up daily at gasoline loading terminals headed for gas stations throughout Rhode Island and beyond. Pipelines carrying oil, natural gas, and propane emanate from huge storage tanks, fueling the regional economy. Electrical transmission lines reach out to the region from Narragansett Electric Company's generating plant. Sewage is treated, scrap metal is processed, asphalt is produced and ships are repaired, all within an integrated network of waterfront businesses.

The City's 100 acre municipal wharf is located within this 600 acre waterfront setting bordered by Allens Avenue. The City has been working, over the past several years, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal port operations.

In support of his goal, the City's recently completed Comprehensive Plan and amended Zoning Ordinance strongly support reinforcing the Port's industrial land use pattern. Clearly, the municipal wharf is a critical focus of maritime commence. Its operations need to be strengthened and expanded as part of an ongoing program geared to addressing the wharf's physical and operational requirements.

A plan presently under consideration is either to sell the Port to the State of Rhode Island Port Authority which would create a single operational entity for the State's Quonset Port facility and City's, or in the alternative, sell the Port to private investors who would identify a private operator whose motivation would be to aggressively market the facility with an eye toward maximizing profit. Either option, it is believed, will result in the creation of a stronger facility.

The vision for Port revitalization requires that a number of critical activities be implemented in the short term. They include the upgrading of docks, piers and wharves at the water's edge. Dredging, the removal of old pilings and pier structures must be undertaken to eliminate navigational and docking hazards. Lease terms at the municipal wharf should be re-evaluated and amended through negotiation to reflect current market conditions. Marketing of the wharf must be professionally managed and aimed at an improved image and at a higher profile within the maritime community.

Business Incubator Development. Several groups Providence are currently investigating the possibility of developing a small business incubator, targeting services currently underprovided in the community. One site in the Elmwood neighborhood in census tract 2 has received particular attention, and possibly benefit from tax exempt bond financing for land and building acquisition.

Existing Federal Resources

Education Funding. The Federal Government currently allocated $18,338,213 to Providence Public School during the 1993-1994 school year. This is an increase of nearly 43% over the 1988-89 federal allocation. It accounted for 10.7 percent of the Department's 1993-1994 budget. Nearly half of the School Department's 1993-1994 federal allocation (44%) comes through Chapter One funds. Of Chapter One, 81% directed to reading programs while 15.5% was used to advance comprehensive school improvement projects at William D'Abate and West Broadway Elementary Schools. In addition to Chapter One money, Providence schools also received sizable grants through Magnet Schools ($1,424,723), the National Science Foundation ($222,250), Title II for inservice training ($316,281), Even Start ($109,979), and Drug Free Schools ($748,536). Cumulatively, bilingual programs account for 13.7% of federal grants, followed by special education (7.4%), vocational education (5.2%) and adult education (1.4%).

Community Development Block Grants. In 1994, the Providence received $7,764,000 in CDBG entitlement funds, an increase of $723,000 from 1993. Overall, CDBG funds have declined and begun to rise again over the past 14 years. Program uses under the city's CDBG program have remained fairly stable over the past 10 years. The principal program categories and share of CDBG funds has generally been the following: Human Services (25%), Housing (20%), Public Facilities (20%), Planning and Administration (20%), and Economic Development (15%)

Section 108 Funds. Over the past seven years, Providence has utilized more than $16.5 million in Section 108 funds for a variety of housing, community, and economic development projects. Examples of the types of activities that have been assisted include the following:

- **Days Hotel.** Initially the City borrowed funds through this program to fund the construction cost of 140 room Days Hotel, located within the City's Old Harbor District. The total project cost of building the Hotel was approximately $10 Million. In addition to the $1.5 Million Section 108, the City also provided a $915,000.00 UDAG grant, with the balance of funds being provided through conventional financing. Not only did this project leverage a significant commitment of private funds; it also created over 58 permanent jobs and increased the City's tax revenue by $100,000 annually.
- **Rau Fastener.** Another notable use of the Section 108 program was a $2 Million loan the City provided to Rau Fastener, Inc. These funds were lent to Rau in an effort to reorganize and strengthen the financial status of this eighty-two year old company. Rau Fastener is a Rhode Island based corporation with operations in Montreal, Quebec, and Belgium. The company is one of the largest manufacturers of snap fasteners and attaching machinery in the world. The Providence operation presently employs approximately 180 people and operates out of a 140,000 square feet facility. The Section 108 funds were used in conjunction with a $3.6 Million State guaranteed industrial revenue bond for a total project cost of $5.6 Million.
- **Providence Plan Housing Corporation.** Recently the City secured a $9 Million Section 108 Loan to fund an innovative comprehensive housing initiative known as the Providence Plan Housing Initiative. This Initiative is being carried our through the Providence Plan Housing Corporation (PPHC), which was formed in 1992. The Section 108 funds are being used to address many of the City's affordable housing needs through programs such as: Home Improvement, Home Acquisition, Abandon Housing Acquisition, First Time Homeowner Program, Demolition/Vacant Lot Program, HOME Program, Nehemiah Program. In an effort to continue the success of these programs the City recently authorized the issuance of a $26 Million bond to provide funding to repay the section 108 loan and to recapitalize the PPHC programs. These tax incremental financing bonds are being secured by increased payments in lieu of taxes from Narragansett Electric, due to the expansion of their Manchester Street facility.
- **Providence Performing Arts Center / Scuccato Corporation.** Presently the City has two Section 108 applications in process. One is to provide funding for a non-profit cultural institution - The Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC) and another for an international gold chain manufacturer - the Scuccato Corporation. The Scuccato Corporation was originally formed in 1981 as an affiliate of the parent company, Ditta Massimiliano Scuccato of Italy. Scuccato is in the business of manufacturing and distributing fine solid gold chain. Since its inception the U.S. operations has experienced continued growth. The Section 108 Loan in the amount of $1.5 Million will assist in financing a $3.6 Million expansion project. The expansion of this company includes the acquisition of a vacant manufacturing facility in the City's Huntington Industrial Park, rehabilitation of the building, acquisition of equipment and working capital. It is anticipated that with this expansion, there will be 60 new permanent employment positions created, while insuring the retention of the 55 existing positions.

Community Services Block Grant funds. In 1994, Providence received $509,189 in CSBG funds through the state of Rhode Island. These funds were used primarily to fund seven of the city's multi-purpose community centers, to provide assist for Providence Community Action's New Start Homes program (home ownership for low- and moderate-income families and individuals), and to provide emergency housing assistance. The multipurpose community centers use their CSBG funds to support a variety of services, including services for

children, youth, and families, adult education, senior citizens programs, transportation, health care services, and a variety of social services such as needs assessment, counseling, and case management. Since the shift to state control of the CSBG program in 1982, Providence's share of CSBG funds has declined sharply. Between 1981 and 1982, Providence's share of funds decreased by nearly 50%, from $843,996 to $474,768. This reduction in CSBG funding has placed a greater strain on the city's Community Development Block Grant program regarding the funding of social services activities.

Federal Housing Funds. Providence has received funding under a number of federal housing programs to assist in the city's efforts to improve the quality of the city's housing stock and to increase the number of affordable housing units to its residents. The Providence Housing Authority has received $64.5 million in Comprehensive Improvement Assistance Program funds since 1987, with an additional $4.2 million being allocated at the beginning of FY 1994-95.

The Providence Plan Housing Corporation administers the city's HOME funds, which have totaled approximately $3.5 million over the past three years. In addition, the PPHC received $798,000 in HOPE 3 funds in 1993, which is being used to write down the cost of rehabilitating abandoned housing for sale to first time home buyers.

Bureau of Justice Administration Community Policing Grant. In April 1994, Providence received word that its application for a grant under the Bureau of Justice Administration's policing program had been approved. Through this grant the city will receive about $1.2 million which, combined with a $1.2 million local match, will allow the city to hire 14 additional police officers that will be assigned to the city's community policing unit, which will bring the total number of officers in community policing to 49. The city is currently exploring strategies for deploying these new officers. One idea receiving serious study is the development of a problem-oriented policing strike force that would assign a team of community police officers, perhaps as many as 6, to work with residents, business owners, and community groups, to attack neighborhood problems.

Urban Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance. In January 1994, the National Parks Service announced that it was adding Providence to the list of cities assisted through its Urban Rivers and Trails Conversation Assistance Program. The city had applied for assistance from the Park Service to aid in the development of the Woonasquatucket River Greenway project (see chapter 11). The primary purposes of this project are threefold: (1) to connect people with the river, (2) to improve the river itself, and (3) to sort out the various types of uses of the river and its contiguous land area, and resolve any conflict that may arise over its use. The proposed greenway project, which will run through some of the city's poorest and most distressed neighborhoods, is being driven by a broad-based coalition of public, private, nonprofit, and citizens groups that include the following: The Providence Plan, the city's parks and planning and development departments, the Trust for Public Land, River Rescue, Save The Bay, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, Brown University, Rhode Island Urban and Community Forestry Council, the Nickerson Community Center, the Joslin Community Development Corporation, the Olneyville Housing Corporation, the Olneyville Businessmen's Association and several neighborhood schools.

State Resources

In fiscal 1993, Providence received $69 million from the State of Rhode Island, which represented about 26 cents of every revenue dollar raised. By contrast, state aid represented about 28 cents of every revenue dollar in 1986. The vast majority of these funds were in the form of aid to education. Over the past few years, state-local fiscal issues have at times been contentious, and though the state itself is currently facing significant fiscal stress, it has taken action to devote more resources to Providence.

The state has committed to fully funding the *Payment in Lieu of Taxes* program, which would mean approximately $7.5 million in revenues for Providence in compensation for the property tax revenues the city cannot tap from its public and nonprofit institutions.

Of greatest importance to the city is the proposed reform in *state education finance*, which could lead to a substantial increase in the amount of state education aid. In fiscal 1995, the city may receive an additional $19 million in state education aid, and if the Guaranteed Student Entitlement is enacted by the General Assembly, Providence could gain as much as $27 million additional dollars in state education aid each year, with a portion of those dollars earmarked for tax relief.

The state has also recently enacted a *Distressed Cities* program, which in fiscal 1994 distributed about $4.0 million to Providence. These general revenue sharing funds are provided to communities in Rhode Island that have the highest tax burden in relation to their relative wealth. Providence has the second highest effective tax rate among Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns.

State funding for *General Public Assistance*, on the other hand, has been cut sharply over the past two years, declining from $14.8 million in fiscal 1992 to about $390,000 in each of fiscal years 1993 and 1994.

As noted in chapter 10, the *Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation* is a major resource for housing assistance in Providence. RIHMFC dispenses $6 million per month in operating subsidies for a total of $72 million annually. In 1991, RIHMFC was designated as Rhode Island's "Principal Housing Agency," bringing new responsibility for managing the State Rental Subsidy Program and the Section 8 Existing Program, which have assisted over 1,500 families. RIHMFC is nationally recognized as a State Housing Finance Agency leader, and has received a Standard and Poor's "Top Tier" status, indicating their highest bond rating.

Over the next several years, RIHMFC is preparing to contribute $22.6 million to three projects located within Providence's proposed Enterprise Community Boundaries. This proposed investment will be used to construct 136 units at Mandela Woods, 24 units at the West End Preservation II, and 12 units at the Indian Village Development.

RIte Care provides comprehensive health care to 75,000 women and children with income of up to 250 percent of the poverty level. A Medicaid Waiver granted to Rhode Island by the Department of Health and Human Services under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act has approved RIte Care as a five-year demonstration project. This and other waivers granted by HHS will allow the state to provide the RIte Care population with their choice of a an HMO and a comprehensive benefit package, including extended family planning, transportation and interpreters, childbirth education, smoking cessation and nutritional counseling. See Chapters 9 and 16 for related discussions.

The *Pathways to Independence* program provides a comprehensive continuum of support services to AFDC recipients making the transition from welfare to work. These services include job training, transportation, day care and extended health care. In fiscal year 1992, the Pathways to Independence budget was $6,858,399. The federal share of that was $4,373,790 while the state contributed $2,484,609. Of all Pathways expenditures, $5,729,776 went to child care services. See Chapters 9 and 16 for related discussions

In fiscal year 1994, the *Rhode Island Department of Health* received $1,754,074 Title V funds, matched by a $7.4 state appropriation. Component A, Pregnant Women, Mothers and Infants, was allocated 24.2 percent of Title V with a $1.9 million State match. Component B, Children and Adolescents received 37% of Title V with a $2.36 million State match, and Component C, Children with Special Health Care Needs, received 31%, with a $4.2 million State match. Seven percent of Title V went to administrative costs.

Rhode Island and Providence have been at the forefront in the community service movement. Three of the projects the state has forwarded to Washington for consideration for National Community Service funding involve the city of Providence. Each of these projects furthers the objectives of the city's strategic plan and all would make important contributions towards enhancing the quality of life in Providence, particularly for its burgeoning youth population.

Local Resources

Changing economic, demographic, and social forces have created structural fiscal pressures on the city's financial condition. The loss of employment, particularly in the manufacturing sector, has led to an erosion of the city's industrial and commercial tax base. In addition, since most of the city's employment growth has occurred in the nonprofit and government sectors—health services, education, government—this expansion has frequently resulted in the loss of additional properties from the city's taxable property base.

As a result of these changes, homeowners and rents have had to carry a greater burden of paying for city services. In 1980, for example, 41 percent of Providence's tax base was residential; by 1990, nearly 60 cents of every tax dollar raised by the city came from residential property owners.

Two additional factors have contributed to the city's fiscal squeeze. One is that Providence has a disproportionate share of the state's disadvantaged residents. As pointed out earlier, Providence has a median family income nearly one-third lower than the statewide figure and a much greater share of the state's poverty population than its overall population. Second, unlike many cities in the United States, Providence is responsible for the financing and administration of its public schools, and school enrollments have been rising much faster than local revenues. As noted in chapter 14, public school enrollments have increased by more than 20 percent over the past decade.

Other factors that have led to increased fiscal pressure on the city budget include existing long-term obligations, such as debt-service costs (much of the increased debt was incurred to pay for school renovations approved by voters in 1986, 1988, and 1990), pension costs, state mandates, and reduced state aid.

In December 1992, Mayor Cianci appointed a task force to examine the city's fiscal condition over the next four years, to assess the anticipated operating deficits during this period, and to develop policy options for achieving financial stability for Providence. The task force report, issued in February 1993, listed four principal strategies for the city to pursue in closing its gap between expenditures and revenues:

1. Expenditure reductions;
2. Disposition of capital assets (e.g., Port of Providence, the metropolitan water system, the Civic Center, Triggs Golf Course);
3. Increased state aid, particularly school aid, general revenue sharing, aid for distressed cities, and the payment-in-lieu of taxes (PILOT) program, which reimburses cities for local tax-exempt organizations that provide benefits statewide such as hospitals, universities, and state institutions, and
4. Local revenue enhancement, such as increased property taxes, payments in-lieu-of taxes, and user fees.

Nearly two-thirds of all city expenditures in fiscal 1993 were for education, fire and police. Education accounted for nearly half of all expenditures (47.1%), with fire and police each accounting for about 9 percent of the city budget. Retirement contributions and debt service accounted for the bulk of the remaining municipal expenditures.

Tax Increment Financing. Providence has used tax increment financing to leverage resources to undertake a number of housing, community, and economic development projects. A tax increment financing district was established in 1986 to provide funding for public improvements along the waterfront in the Old Harbor district. The city's most ambitious use of tax increment financing involves its use of the additional revenues being generated by Narragansett Electric's expansion of the Manchester Street Power Plant. This $600 million project, which will generate approximately $7.5 million annually in additional property tax revenues over a 23-year period, was the foundation for the development of the city's ambitious Providence Plan. Using TIF proceeds, the

city established the Providence Plan Housing Corporation, which has leveraged these funds with state and federal funds to create a $132.6 million pool of funds to improve the city's housing stock and living conditions in the neighborhoods through a variety of public improvements and facilities, such as community centers and recreation centers. Presently, the city is planning to use tax increment financing to pay to cover its $47 million share of the costs of constructing a 5,000 space parking garage which will form the foundation for the construction of a major new regional shopping mall, which may begin construction this fall.

Additional Federal Resources Needed to Implement Plan

While Providence recognizes that many of the resources needed to implement its strategic plan can be found locally through greater identification, mobilization, and utilization of state, local, and private and nonprofit resources, the city also recognizes that these resources by themselves will not be sufficient to transform Providence into the livable city envisioned by its citizens without the aid and assistance of the federal government.

Grants Pending. Providence has several federal grants pending that are critical to the implementation of its strategic plan. These include the following:

AmeriCorps.

Salve Regina/ Dorcas Place Collaborative for Community Service will link 15 Salve Regina students with 15 women from Dorcas Place to provide Adult Basic Education to 30 low-income adults and encourage higher education for the Dorcas Place participants.

Rhode Island Children's Crusade for Higher Education works to decrease drop-out rates and increase the number of college-ready, work-ready youth in the region, particularly among low-income and minority populations. In conjunction with scholarships, the most critical components of the Children's Crusade are the tutoring and mentoring services. The Crusade will place 26 AmeriCorps volunteers in seven Rhode Island school districts.

City Year Rhode Island will unite 77 diverse young people for ten-months of full time service and leadership development.

Youth Fair Chance. The Providence School Department in partnership with the Providence/Cranston JTPA has applied for demonstration project funding through the Department of Labor to develop a neighborhood-based school-to-work transition model. Youth Fair Chance strives to close the gap between schools, students and employers by providing in-school and out-of-school youth with the training and support that will lead to access to the job market. Training will take place in job-specific clusters which focus intensively on the skills necessary for employment in jobs in addition to the total-quality management skills which businesses expect in all employees.

Youthbuild. Several entities in the state of Rhode Island have applied to Department of Housing and Urban Development for Youthbuild Planning and/or Implementation money. Large commitments to housing and construction by the private and public sector statewide and in Providence make Youthbuild an excellent concept to addresses the long term housing and job training needs of Providence and its residents.

Federal grants that will be applied for:

The Providence Housing Authority anticipates applying for the following grants by the end of 1994

From the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Public Housing Drug Elimination Program. The PHA will apply for over $600, 000 to fund a broad range of programs intended targeted towards substance abuse prevention programs. Specific programs will include GED, ESL, fieldtrips, lectures and classroom training.

Family Investment Centers. A $1 million grant to establish programs which promote resident self-sufficiency through education and job training.

Tenant Opportunity TIA Grant. Funding to promote resident management opportunities

FIC/Youth Initiative Program.

Fair Housing Initiative Program. A $50,000 grant to promote fair housing through a statistical analysis of the city's neighborhoods to determine racial patterns.

Elderly Service Coordinators. $125,000 to hire service coordinators at buildings for the elderly and disabled.

Moving to Opportunities. Funds to encourage families to move of out inner cities to jobs and opportunities elsewhere.

Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinators. Funds to hire a coordinator to monitor participants in the Family Self Sufficiency program.

From the Department of Health and Human Services

Youth Gang/Drug Prevention. This will be an application for a planning grant to prepare a strategic planning coalition to combat youth violence attributed to drug abuse.

Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project: The National Park Service has applied internally with the Department of Interior for funding to support the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project, which the NPS is promoting collaboratively with The Providence Plan. The Project's goal is to develop opportunities for recreation, education, conservation, and community and economic development along the river.

Rhode Island Department of Children Youth and Families: Family Preservation and Support Initiative. DCYF will be applying for a planning and implementation grant from the Department of Health and Human Services. This money will initiate a five year restructuring process aimed at reorienting the department's philosophy towards family-focused, community-based service delivery which eliminates the unnecessary separation of children from their families. DCYF policies will respect and value cultural diversity and seek to establish permanency and stability in the lives of children through reunification with parents, adoption or other permanent living arrangements.

A *Section 108 loan* for $5 million will be requested by the City of Providence to recapitalize the PEDC revolving loan fund. This fund will be used to continue to promote small business development in the city's neighborhoods.

Request for Additional Section 8 Certificates. Although Providence is currently mobilizing an impressive array of resources in the area of affordable housing, most notably through a $26 million tax incremental financing bond issue, there is still a large gap in meeting Providence's needs. In particular, while the city has done much to increase home ownership opportunities through RIHMFC and PPHC programs, there is a great shortage of affordable rental units. Between 1980 and 1990, median rents grew nearly twice as fast as income, resulting in families having to spend an increasing share of income on housing costs. According to the 1990 census, nearly 26 percent of all Providence renter households (9,699) paid more than 50 percent of their income on gross rent. Renter households with annual incomes below $10,000 paid even more on rent, with a median of more than 50 percent of income spent on gross rent.

In response to this situation, the State of Rhode Island has created a Rental Subsidy Program. Beginning in 1990, 664 units have been funded for a twenty year period, at a total cost of $100 million. RIHMFC has recently committed $12 million from its reserves to support this program over the next three years. However, do to the

high cost, Rhode Island's rental subsidies are limited to sustaining the existing project based units, with no current plans to expand the program.

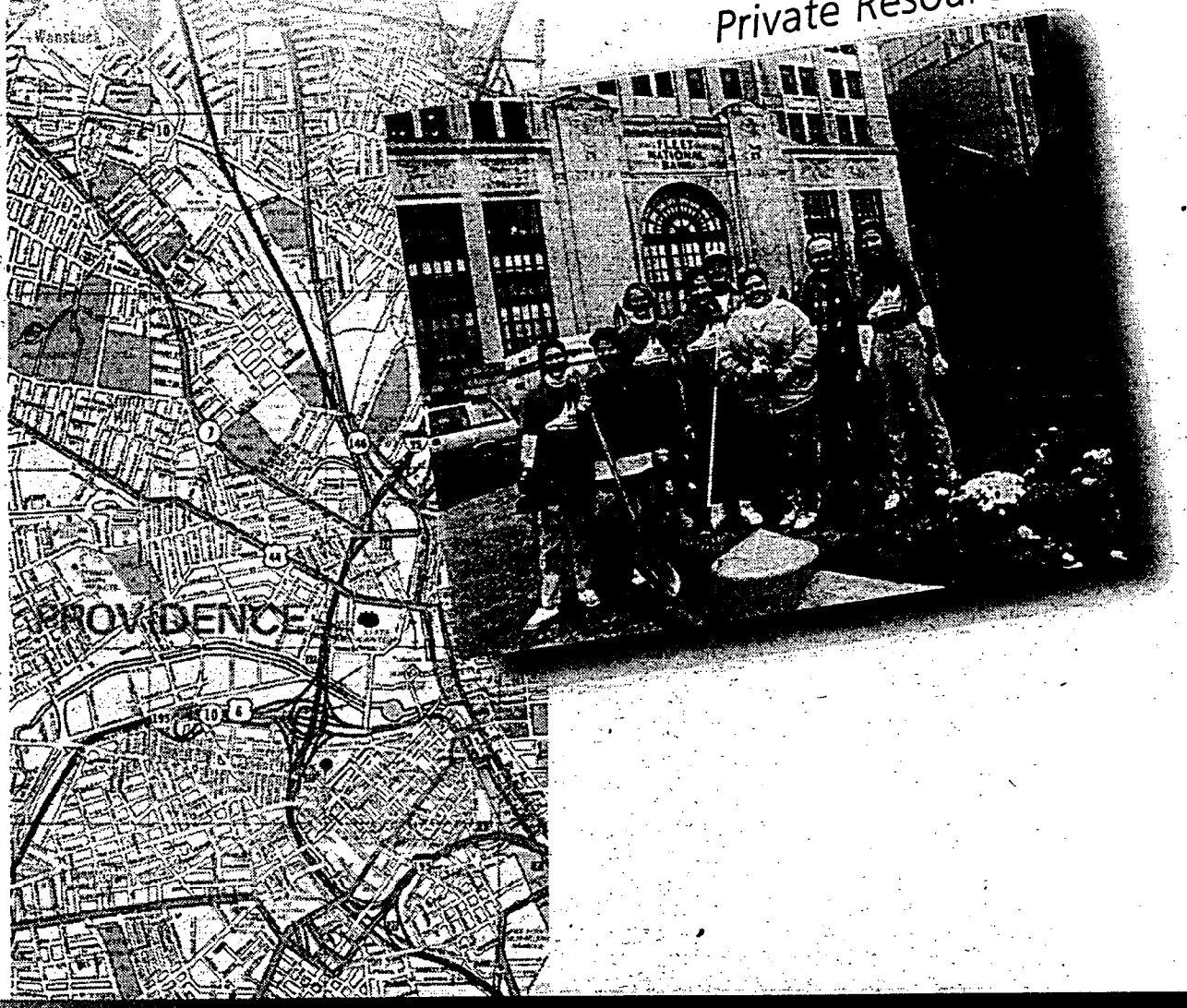
Federal Section 8 subsidies are also in short supply in Providence. The Providence Housing Authority administers 1,635 vouchers and certificates throughout the city, and has a waiting list of 1,578 names with an average wait of three to five years.

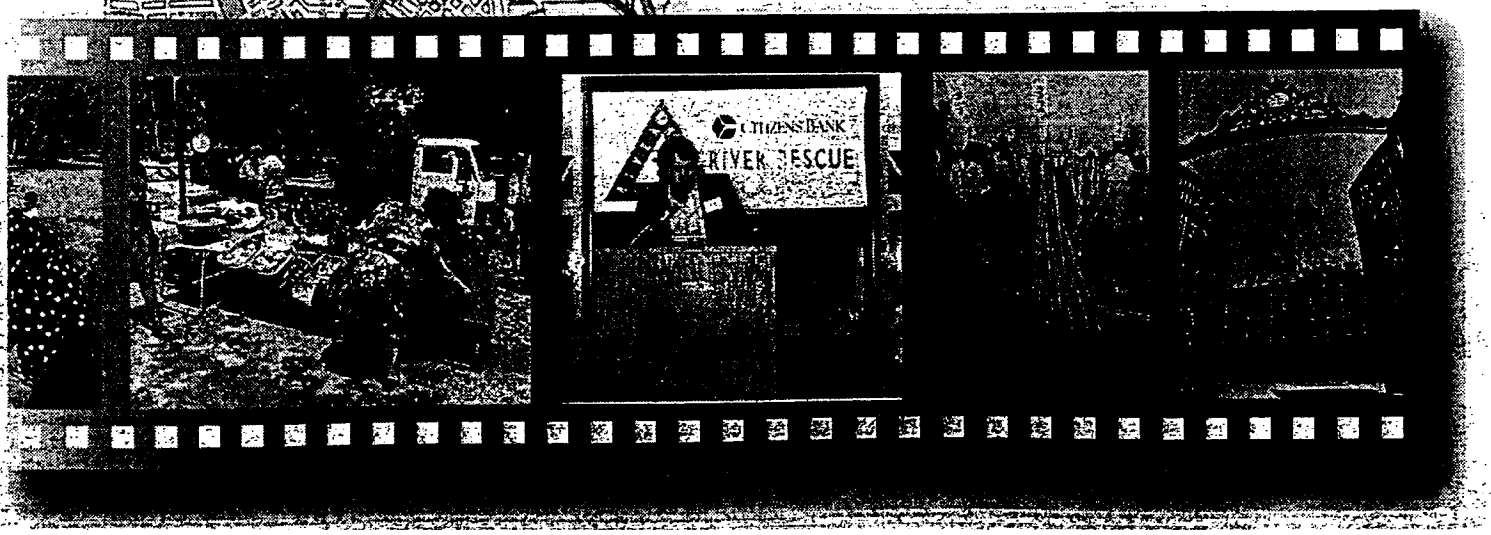
Unfortunately, as this information demonstrates, local resources and the current amount of federal support is insufficient to deal with the rental affordability problem. Therefore, Providence is requesting an additional 150 project based Section 8 certificates to implement our housing and supportive services strategy. During Fiscal Year 1994, the Providence Plan Housing Corporation will rehabilitate approximately 150 units of rental housing located in formerly abandoned triple-deckers that will be restored for owner occupancy. New project based Section 8 certificates administered throughout the Providence Housing Authority would be earmarked for these units, thereby supporting all three of the housing strategies identified in this strategic plan:

1. *Address the problem of vacant and abandoned properties.* New certificates would be dedicated to multi-unit properties occupied by homeowners assisted by the PPHC and its nonprofit partners. This will make renting units to neighborhood residents easier, and alleviate one of the main concerns of new landlords.
2. *Develop a neighborhood-based housing policy.* The PPHC's abandoned housing program is targeted in several focus areas and impact streets throughout the enterprise zone. New federal rental subsidies would add to the mix of resources dedicated to achieving a concentrated and comprehensive neighborhood revitalization.
3. *Provide a continuum of housing choices.* While potential homeowners are currently being offered several programs to expand their housing choices, poorer Providence residents and renters usually have the fewest options. New Section 8 certificates would help expand the housing continuum further into rental opportunities.

In addition, new Section 8 certificates would be linked to the Medical Enterprise Zone by providing housing assistance to program participants, who would be given priority by the PPHC in renting the newly rehabilitated housing units.

Private Resources





Chapter 19
Private Resources

As noted in chapter 4, Providence's economy has undergone a dramatic restructuring over the past 12 years. Between 1980 and 1992 the city lost half of its manufacturing jobs, a decline from 34,225 in 1980 to 17,506 in 1992. During this same period, the number of services jobs increased sharply, rising from 33,767 to 48,044. Thus, Providence's economy in 1992 looks dramatically different from that of 1980. Whereas manufacturing and service jobs were about equal, in 1992 there were nearly three times as many services jobs as there were manufacturing jobs, with the greatest growth taking place in the health and education sectors. Thus, unlike many cities where there is a strong local presence of private companies, in Providence the key institutions in its local economy are its hospitals and universities. Only two of the private companies headquartered in Providence ranked among the top 500 industrial companies in 1993 according to *Fortune* magazine: Textron (number 57) and Nortek (427).

Business Community

1. Providence's Banking Community.

Bank Links Program. The Providence Plan Housing Corporation is currently working with private lenders to develop a home purchase program whereby banks and a private mortgage insurer (PMI) enter a risk share agreement in which the PMI agrees to finance up to 83 percent of a mortage default. This program should help finance 350 homes in a three-year period of time.

Rhode Island Hospital Trust Bank First Community Bank. Hospital Trust's First Community Bank was conceived in 1991 as a "bank within a bank," a focused marketing and retail strategy to create a more visible, effective, and responsive banking presence in the predominantly minority, low- and moderate-income neighborhoods of Elmwood, South Providence and the West End. All three of these neighborhoods are included within the city's Enterprise Community boundaries.

First Community Bank provides access to banking products and services designed for urban consumers and small businesses. A full-service branch office, FCB offers a range of products and services, including checking and savings accounts, consumer loans, home mortgages and small business loans. FCB efforts have included expanded hours, expanded personal service and multi-lingual outreach and advertising, educational seminars, creation of an Advisory Board of community and business leaders, and efforts to recruit staff who know the community well and are dedicated to achieving its success.

Through the FCB, products especially attractive to low- and moderate-income communities have been developed, including First Step Mortgage, First Step Checking, and First Step Savings. FCB marketing efforts have included seminars for small business owners and first-time homebuyers, consumer credit seminars, newspaper and radio advertisements in English and Spanish, brochures in several languages, direct mail, and special branch events. In 1994, FCB introduced a Spanish language small business loan application to better serve the small businesses in the community.

Citizens' Bank River Rescue. Citizen's Bank provides primary funding and significant in-kind and volunteer support for the River Rescue, a program which promotes river stewardship through river monitoring and community education. Citizens' funds a rescue coordinator through the University of Rhode Island who

coordinates monitoring and volunteer activities along the Blackstone, Moshassuck, Woonasquatucket, Pawtuxet and Ten Mile Rivers.

Fleet Bank's INCITY Initiative. In February 1994, senior officials of the Fleet Financial Group, headquartered in Providence, were joined in Washington by senior officials in the Clinton Administration along with community leaders to unveil Fleet's new $8 billion community lending and service program, known as Fleet INCITY. The most comprehensive lending commitment ever made by a U.S. Financial institution, the three-year program is to be the centerpiece of a nationwide community lending and outreach program. The principal purpose of the program is to improve access to credit for low- and moderate-income citizens for affordable housing and for small businesses, particularly women- and minority-owned businesses for commercial and microloan lending programs. The impact of Fleet's INCITY investment is likely to be as much as $31 million in Rhode Island. In addition, Fleet has filed an application with the Federal Reserve Board to establish and fund a new $15 million Fleet Community Development Corporation to address the needs of small businesses and economic development projects in the six states in which Fleet has banking operations. While the specifics of Fleet's INCITY initiatives in Rhode Island remain to be worked out in greater detail, this initiative represents a significant opportunity for the city and state to join with Fleet in a variety of public/private joint ventures in the areas of housing and community and economic development.

Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber has been an ongoing advocate of reform in the Providence School System. After providing initial support for the PROBE Commission investigation into the system, the Chamber donated $200,000 to fund a two-year full-time grant writer (PROBE recommendation number 29). Hired in March, 1994, this grant writer works with the School Department to identify funding specifically to implement PROBE recommendations.

Business Development Company of Rhode Island. The Business Development Company of Rhode Island was created in 1953 to meet the growth and expansion needs of promising, but undercapitalized, Rhode Island businesses. Its principal stockholders are the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Providence Chamber Foundation. The BDC's mission is to provide alternative financing to promising Rhode Island business who have difficulty in securing financing through conventional sources. BDC loans generally range from $50,000 to $1,000,000, and the loans are generally structured as junior or subordinate financing. BDC is also an approved Small Business Administration 7-A lender, which enables it to leverage additional financing to make more loans. Since its restructuring in 1985, BDC has loaned more than $20 million to Rhode Island businesses, which in turn, have preserved and/or created more than 4,000 jobs, an important contributions to efforts to rebuild Rhode Island's economy.

Ocean State Business Development Authority. OSBDA, a US Small Business Administration certified non-profit development company, is one of the largest certified development corporations in the nation. In 1990, the OSBDA was recognized as the largest provider of 503/504 financing during the corporation's first decade. By working with bank loan officers, accountants, and attorneys, the OSBDA provides loans to businesses which plan to construct a new building or to obtain equipment. In the fiscal year 1992-1993, twelve businesses in Providence were helped by the OSBDA, helping to create jobs and economic expansion.

Minority Investment Development Corporation. MIDC is a consortium of the State's leading banks and corporations working in concert with volunteer members of the minority community. Developed by the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce and the Rhode Island Urban Project, MIDC makes loans and equity investments in Minority Business Enterprises and companies controlled or operated by socially and/or economically disadvantaged group members. Initial funding of $1.7 million, provided by banks, corporations, foundations and government agencies, is expected to exceed $4 million.

Coalition for Community Development. CCD was formed to stimulate development of property the downtown area marked by Dorrance, Fountain, Empire, Washington and Weybosset streets. Headed by former Rhode Island Governor Philip Noel, the group has raised over $500,000 through membership contributions. Participants include Cookson America, Pyramid Cos., Brown University, Fleet National Bank, Rhode Island Hospital Trust,

the Providence Journal, Rhode Island School of Design, Roger Williams University and The Continental Companies.

Nonprofits: Hospitals, Universities and Philanthropic Organizations

Providence's independent hospitals and universities are an important economic engine for the city's economy. Collectively, these institutions generate more than one billion dollars in economic activity for the city and state on an annual basis. They account for nearly 5,000 people that are employed in Providence with an annual payroll of more than $150 million. Another $134.8 million is paid by these institutions to Providence vendors for the purchase of goods and services. In addition, the colleges and universities granted more than $9.2 million in scholarships to Rhode Island residents and the hospitals provided more than $24 million in uncompensated care during fiscal 1992. In addition to several million paid in various state taxes, these institutions and their employees collectively paid the city nearly $6.0 million in property and excise taxes.

Coalition of Independent Colleges and Hospitals. The 10 independent colleges and hospitals of Providence have formed an unprecedented coalition to identify new ways of helping Providence and its people. The coalition consists of the following institutions: Brown University, Butler Hospital, Johnson and Wales University, The Miriam Hospital, Providence College, Rhode Island Hospital, Rhode Island School of Design, Roger Williams Medical Center, St. Joseph Hospital, and Women and Infants Hospital. Working with the Providence School Department, the Providence Blueprint for Education (PROBE) report, and the Healthy People 2000 report issued by the Rhode Island Department of Health, the coalition has agreed to commit $1.4 million in cash and in-kind contributions to launch 12 new health and education programs. These programs include the following:

- **Summer Institute for Building Communities of Learners.** This two-week long program will be offered to all teachers and administrators and some parents and students Its goals is to facilitate the division of the three comprehensive high schools into smaller units in September of 1994.
- **Telecommunications Program for Providence Public Schools.** Through Brown University's Instructional Television Fixed Service, the coalition will provide the resources to install the equipment necessary for linkage with the NASA education system in most Rhode Island school, beginning with Providence.
- **English as a Second Language/Limited English Proficient Initiative.** The coalition would provide courses to the 250 teachers in need of ESL/LEP certification. The Teachers Union has identified this a major need.
- **"Christmas in April"** On April 30th, volunteers from 20 businesses and non-profit organizations will perform home improvements and beautification projects in the Elmhurst neighborhood.
- **"Adopt-A-Student."** The coalition will offer tailored mentoring services to high-need students on a large scale that would continue from grammar school thorough the completion of high school. The pilot program will begin at Providence College.
- **Feinstein High School Collaborative.** PC's Feinstein Institute for Public Service, through a $5 million grant, will form a collaborative with the newly developed Feinstein High School in Providence. Other coalition members will lend their support to the team teaching approach of the school. Computer Technology Support Center. The Center will provide a trouble shooting service to Providence teachers and administrators, as well as complementing the enrichment service for software and computers.

- **Providence "Healthy Kids Initiative."** A mobile team will travel to designated schools and provide hearing screenings, lead screening, immunizations, and health assessments as needed.
- **Providence "Work" Initiative.** The coalition will provide training in health careers for high school students in Providence public schools and for economically disadvantaged Providence residents.
- **A "Blue Ribbon Commission" of Hospitals and Colleges.** The coalition will develop a plan that will systematically bring together key members of the colleges and hospitals with others in the state in order to strengthen business activities in the city and state.
- **Anti-Graffiti Program.** The coalition will structure an educational component through RISD to help channel the artistic talent of taggers. After the workshops the city provides materials to the taggers to create murals in Providence.
- **"New Directions in Art Education."** The coalition will create a "Center for the Advancement of Art and Design Education" located on the campus of Rhode Island School of Design to organize and coordinate the art curriculum of Providence.

Rhode Island and Women and Infants Hospitals. In addition to their participation in the coalition of colleges and universities noted above, Rhode Island Hospital is committed to playing a major role in the implementation of the city's strategic plan. As noted in Chapter 18, Rhode Island and Women and Infants Hospitals will be major partners in the Medical Enterprise Zone program. Rhode Island Hospital has committed $500,000 to this project and has agreed to hire 250 low-income residents from nearby neighborhoods. Women and Infants Hospital has committed $250,000 to this project. In addition, each hospital will play a major leadership role in nurturing collaborative community development.

United Way of Southeastern New England. United Way of Southeastern New England ($200,000) and Rhode Island Human Resources Investment Council ($500,000) have created a statewide pool of funds to meet the needs identified through the *Needs for the Nineties* research program. It is highly likely that some of these funds will be invested in Providence with the possibility of other organizations contributing to this fund.

The Rhode Island Foundation. The Rhode Island Foundation has been a force for change in Providence and Rhode Island during its 78 year history. With an endowment of nearly $200 million, the Foundation provides grants to a variety of nonprofit organizations working in the arts, education, health, hosing social services, and other fields. The foundation has recently hired a new president who is committed to moving the foundation in a new direction which commits the foundation to projects with a larger impact. It is particularly interested in examining ways to promote neighborhood economic development.

Examples of recent projects the Foundation has founded in Providence include support for a "Students as Mediators" program at Mt. Pleasant High School, the National Trust for Public Land for an initiative to preserve open space, and First Night Providence to promote minority involvement in the city's New Year's Eve festivities.

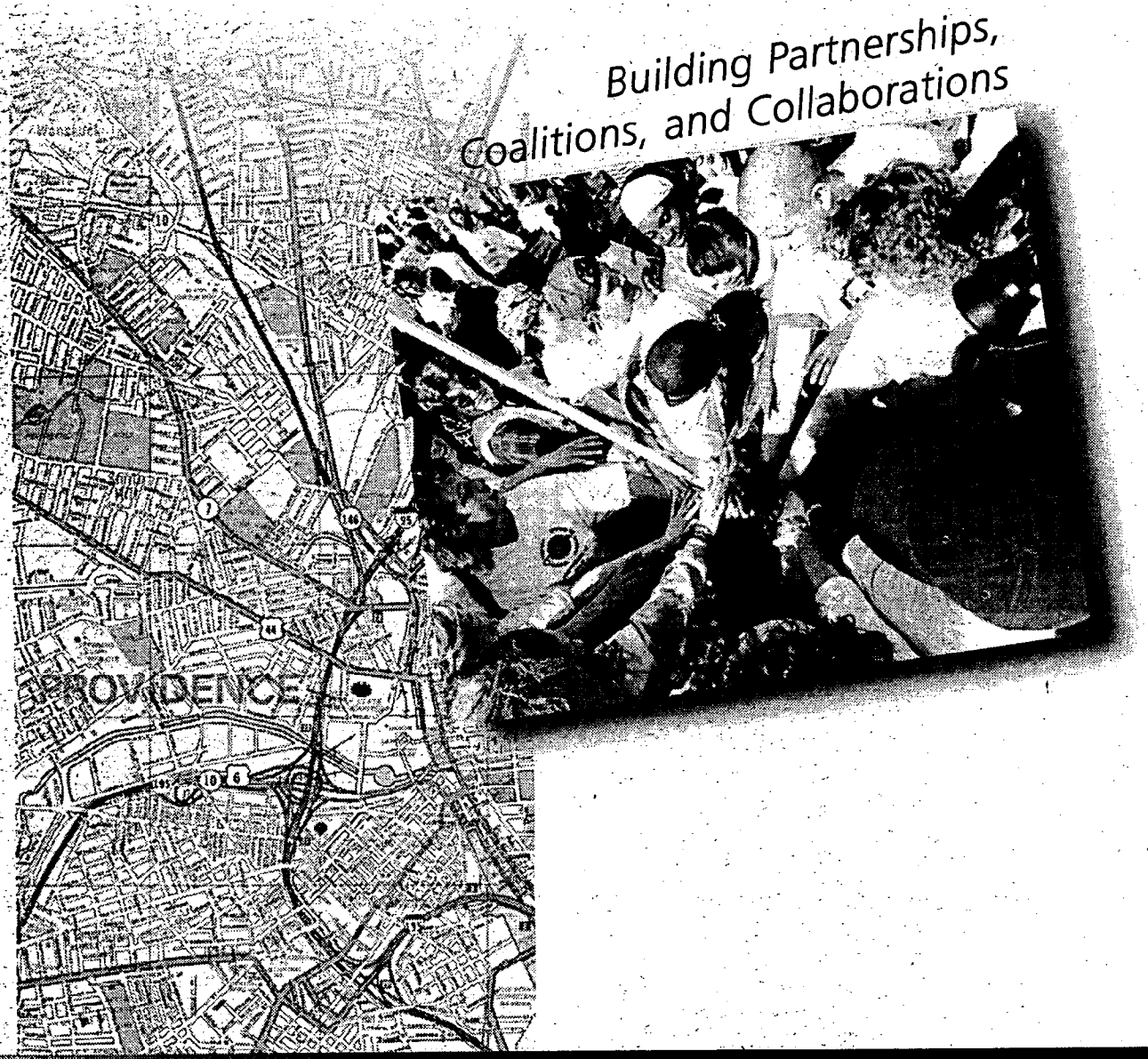
Fund for Community Progress. The Fund was established in 1982 to provide an alternate source of funding to social service agencies hurt by government cutbacks. An affiliate of Community Share/USA, the Fund for Community Progress channels private contributions to a number of grassroots organizations working towards social change. In addition to individual pledges, the Fund receives money from the State Employees Charitable Appeal, the Combined Federal Campaign and the United Way.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation. The Rhode Island offices of LISC has offered financial and technical assistance to community development corporations since 1991. Local supporters have contributed $2.1 million to LISC's initial pool of funds which has been matched with $2.8 million from National LISC and its subsidiary,

National Equity Fund. In 1993, Rhode Island LISC, in cooperation with the Rhode Island Foundation, the United Way, the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHMFC) and the Prince Charitable Trust, launched the Neighborhood Development Fund which has raised $700,000 for five CDC's.

Part V Implementation of Strategic Plan

Building Partnerships, Coalitions, and Collaborations



Chapter 20
Reinventing Government:
Building Partnerships, Coalitions, and Collaborations

Introduction and Overview

The city of Providence has embarked on a bold experiment. Following in the footsteps of the founder of our state, Roger Williams, the essence of this plan requires the Enterprise Community to reconnect with the founding story of the state which called for its citizens "to go forth as a lively experiment." Our experiment is simple and complex: each of the priority projects requires both the reinvention of government and formal collaboration among the many partners. In summary, we are prepared to go against the grain in order to move Providence to become more of a livable city.

Reinventing Government in Rhode Island

Reengineering requires starting over or uncovering a core process that will deliver a result to a customer. The customer is defined as the government service recipient. The customer becomes the focus of the restructuring of delivery systems and processes that serve him or her; the focus no longer is on the process itself. All previous givens and assumptions are suspended. One starts with a blank slate and aligns all activities that, when taken together, produce outcomes which best match the needs of the customers. A core process has a beginning and an end (e.g., product development becomes the core process of moving from concept to prototype). In reengineering, one focuses on the work needed to produce the outcome (a core process or product), not on a department or the organization in place.

State and local changes being made to facilitate implementation of the strategic plan. Government and human service is substantially reengineering its key processes to better serve clients in an integrated fashion. Here are some of the more vital ones that are essential to fully implementing the strategic plan.

- *State Department of Human Services Staff becoming Generalists Positioned Forward in the Neighborhoods.* This initiative is in the conceptual stage. Implementation would involve an increase in the use of an automated, intelligent information system to hold the key information required for a one-stop shop client services delivery system. Further, the role of the human service professional would shift from being a categorical specialist to a generalist able to assess and refer all clients and their problems. Clients would interact in environments friendlier than what is traditionally expected in a welfare office.
- *Outstationing of JAS Terminals at Pathways Service Sites.* This initiative is in the development phase with three test sites. In the face of severe resource constraints and the need for one stop shopping, the Rhode Island Department of Human Services is streamlining and improving services through the establishment of a single information point of contact for clients' assessment and eligibility determination. This project is seen as a capacity building step for service providers to help meet the increasing demand for job placement as an outcome of human service work in the welfare department.

- *State Department of Employment and Training Staff Make Decisions Based on Customers' Priorities.* This project has been implemented. Managers are trained to be mobilizers of resources for staff instead of traffic cops. A manager negotiates deadlines and constraints with a staff person and then gets out of the way so he or she can fully respond to customer needs.
- *Formal Funding Alliance between the Human Resource Investment Council and the United Way Critical Issues Fund.* This project is just short of implementation with the first cycle of applications currently in process. A key solution to reducing the overwhelming number of people using the human service system is to reduce its use and duplication by effective job creation and training. The HRIC and the United Way have pooled their resources to fund innovative proposals that address the workforce/workplace needs of targeted populations. The focus is on results: job creation and training. Formal collaboratives are the only eligible entities for funding.
- *Installation of a Formal Performance-Based Management System within the Providence Housing Authority.* This project has been implemented. A new director is given autonomy regarding hiring and firing of all staff and set up the performance-based evaluation process. A comprehensive reorganization of work flows was completed that led to new and formal functional statements for all positions. The new performance system includes over-arching goals, performance indicators with benchmarked standards, standard operating procedures, tight timelines, and formal monthly staff reviews.
- *A City-wide Data System to Coordinate Strategic Information for Community Economic Development.* This is in the conceptual stage. The intent is to build a city-wide data system in phases that will support the development of community-based economic development. For example, one aspect of the Phase I goal is to define an accurate profile of owners of vacant buildings in the city by integrating the tax roll source, recorder of deeds, number of housing court violations and the number of police visits. Currently, this data is within four different sources and only one part is automated.
- *Breaking up the City's High Schools into "Houses."* This initiative is in progress. The city's four large high schools are being restructured into smaller "schools within a school" or "houses" in order to nurture more personal environments and closer student/adult relationships. These houses will open in the fall of 1994. Students will be engaged in active learning that draws on multiple disciplines and that makes use of resources available in the community. Each "house" is comprised of 150 to 300 students who remain intact as a group throughout their years in the school with a limited number of teachers. The teaching team meets and develops a curriculum with a thematic interdisciplinary focus. Teachers also work with their principles to design and coordinate professional development opportunities relevant to their unit. New measures of performance are being formulated such as student portfolios. The portfolios contain samples of students' work, follow the students from first grade to high school graduation, and ultimately reflect the students' cumulative achievements more accurately. Principals, teachers, parents, and other members of the community are involved in developing these smaller school units.
- *School-Based Accountability.* This initiative is close to full implementation. The basis of this program is to provide for a more democratic and inclusive approach to governance of individual schools, and above all, to create schools that are more responsive to the specific needs and strengths of their students and the community. The school-based accountability model authorizes critical decision-making power to a school site team. Decisions include budgeting, hiring and selecting from a menu of curriculum options. The school site team of nine to fifteen people includes the principal, teachers, professional staff, parents, community members, and students. The school personnel on the site team comprise no more than one-half of the membership plus one. The aims of the school site team are to develop and use the resources of

all stakeholders to enhance the learning of children and to: make the school environment and curriculum more reflective of the community; provide and allocate decision-making authority, to both individuals and teams, that will facilitate the implementation of specific school goals and plans; help the principal find effective ways to manage school business so that he or she can concentrate on being an educational leader; build a strong sense of ownership and pride in the school on the part of the parents, professional and support staff, teachers, students, and community members.

Lessons Learned that Can Accelerate Reengineering. The aforementioned re-engineering efforts and others have yielded the following lessons learned:

1. In the definition of the problem be sure to consider the full systems impact and how an intervention in one part of the system most often unintentionally causes damage in many other parts. Government has a tendency to rush in with the quick solutions. Instead, a more detailed and thorough assessment process, across functions, must be completed prior to implementing any new initiative.
2. In the early launch, a follow through process must be fully considered. Many old line managers stay stuck in their old roles and don't move forward with the process.
3. Sometimes reengineers must clean house and start over with new people. Giving people chances often reinforces maintaining old, unbreakable patterns of behavior.
4. Ways must be found so that people want to be rewarded for their efforts, keeping in mind that what excites the rewarder may not interest the awardee. Profile people in public, like the DET does on DETV (the employment and training TV station), and select some to travel off-site to present their work to colleagues. Conduct off-site meetings where people have fun and get to tell stories.
5. Continually find new and creative ways of asking people to do more and do things differently while clients keep coming at them. In some ways, it is essential to create the large snowball effect, so the process of change fosters its own momentum. In other ways the process has to be slowed down to build support and forge an open communication channel between the layers.
6. Set standards and be fair and firm with all staff; avoid showing favoritism. Deliver on the promises and don't waiver from commitments. Often in government change fails because one group or person is favored over another. Continually train and educate all staff to learn the new way of working.
7. In a collaborative, the purpose comes first and process supports it. Even when one partner has a larger investment, hold to the principle that we are partners and regardless of who has the best system, it should be used (even if they have the smaller investment).
8. In a change process get people to read books like ZAP; At America's Service and Breakthrough Strategy. The trick is not to adopt one book's approach, but to allow people in a work group to extract concepts and design a framework that fits the context of the agency.

The Profile of a Successful Re-engineer

Drawing from interviews of successful reengineers in Providence and in Rhode Island, a profile of their leadership emerges:

The mindset includes—

- Focusing the impact of a decision on the people to be served and understanding the ripples and impacts in the chain of events that every change engenders.
- Doing the right things the right way the first time.
- Accessing the key decision makers who have the clout.
- Driving all processes to be outcome focused.
- Innovating and going outside of the box to be exposed to new ideas before implementing a new initiative.
- Balancing an appreciation of what is with a desire to invent and move forward.
- combining a drive that is hopeful, persistent and crazy along with a healthy dose of ego.

Skills of a reengineer include —

- Basic management skills like service orientation, planning and scheduling.
- Leadership by sticking your neck out and taking it on the chin.
- Communication, both verbal and written and delivering what you said you would do.
- Flexibility, meeting people where they are at and knowing when to be patient and when to be persistent and relentless.
- Be a Petri dish for others by serving as a "chemical culture" in which another person's thoughts can grow.

Essential tools used by reengineers include —

- Data and automated systems to show the root cause and key trends.
- Leaders in high influential places and not always in your department.
- Other people's ideas that have worked.
- Clear performance measures and reports on progress.

What Requires Re-Engineering in Rhode Island

When asked to speculate, successful city and state reengineers suggest these projects for consideration in Providence and Rhode Island:

1. For launching all new initiatives, government must set standards, design a clear process and stay with it ; when politics tries to intervene, the leader must state: "I am out of here."
2. Install a performance indicators system for monitoring outcomes and issuing reports to the citizens.
3. Install a performance-based promotion and compensation system for all city and state employees.
4. Privatize core functions when the existing unions can't compete with the price the service is worth. In other words, open up the competition to all outsiders as well as those who are currently employed.

5. Plastic "smart cards" for all those who are served by human services. Each card contains the equivalent of the vouchers and checks issued from several sources. The card can easily be "charged" at any local bank with the amount of credit due the recipient.
6. Integrated macro strategic planning for city and state government where opportunities are rated, resources concentrated on priorities across departments, and there is a big, integrated public plan that cuts across all departments. The plan is sequenced so it shows how, over time, all will be served.

Best Practices in Government in Rhode Island

Successful city and state reengineers report using best practices like those that follow:

1. The Department of Employment and Training for its employee profile process. The DET profile people in public, like on DETV (the employment and training TV station) and let them travel off site to present their work to colleagues in other cities and states. They conduct regular off-site meetings where people have fun and get to tell their stories.
2. The DET for its distinct way of informing the non-winners in a competitive bid process. They hold a losers conference where the DET shows the losers how to improve their applications for next time. They show what made a winning proposal and point out the weaknesses of the recent submissions. Each person gets a specific critique of their proposal as well.
3. DET for developing a stable of leading companies that are doing continuous improvement. These companies help spread the word why changes in the workplace are vital. The DET keeps upping the ante and working to build a reciprocal relationship with the enlightened companies. They showcase the good work of the inner circle of companies constantly.
4. DET for its cross-training program which moves employees from office to office and function to function.
5. DET for designing and implementing customer-friendly processes in employment offices. The counter tops were lowered so client and worker were at eye level and thus less authoritarian interactions occur. These offices have work stations where a new breed of generalist can handle all DET issues and there are interactive video stations for ongoing learning while you wait your turn.

State-Local Collaboration

Collaboration Defined

Collaboration occurs when two or more competencies come together to achieve a shared vision that no one partner can achieve alone. The vision must contained dreams and pragmatic projects that will pull the energy of the partners up and into the future and beyond self interest. The partners must hold mutual respect for each other and thus have a common philosophy about the means of achieving the agreed to ends. Further, the partners must realize that each other is vital to achieving the end, despite the differences in size or influence. A collaborative integrates all of the core competencies required to achieve the vision. Each partner delivers their distinct competence, that is the know how that sets it apart from the other; the know how that can't be replicated by another partner.

Learning to collaborate is much easier than forming a collaborative. Collaborating can be defined, by some, as sharing information, while being a collaborative is coming together in a formal, legal structure. This requires commitment, trust, and a sense of equality among the partners. The partnership must be designed so that everyone involved wins. Ideas must be openly solicited and encouraged, and needed in a collaboration. Working the common ground of a community focus sets the stage for collaboration since the collaborating partners all share this common vision of community enhancement. In unity, there is strength, and collaboratives offer more competencies in one package when competing for funding than the partners do singularly. This critical massing of partners requires that each possess a level of trust and appreciation of each other; this is the glue that binds a collaborative.

Some Key Concerns About Collaboration

A focus group among the leading collaborators in Providence was held during this planning process. From this group some lessons have been distilled.

1. Being driven by yearly budgets, nonprofits have another-time horizon, yet collaboration requires a long-term view before the payoff arrives. Achieving economies of scale takes years to achieve and usually only after initial investments of added resources during the learning curve period.
2. The American belief system values highly independent and competitive people. Yet, learning to cooperate — one of the essences of collaboration — is critical to achieving full services for clients.
3. Another hurdle involves trust. In a collaborative, each partner works separate from the other, so each has to trust that the other will do their work, without checking up on all of the details.
4. Design a collaborative so everyone wins.
5. A new concept or organizational structure is required. Historically, in stand alone nonprofits, everything is run under one roof in one place. Yet, formal collaboratives thrive on a dispersed structure, where the structure is comprised of multiple sites (each competence) which are woven together.

Highlights of Functioning State and Local Collaboration

Child Opportunity Zones (COZs). This initiative is in progress. The R.I. Department of Education has developed partnerships with a number of other agencies including the Departments of Substance Abuse and Health, the United Way and the R.I. Foundation toward the endstate of synchronizing health, social and educational services for all students and their families. The cornerstone of this initiative is the belief that if the "playing field" is to be level for all students, steps must be taken to ensure that all students and their families, regardless of wealth, have equal access to support services. This initiative is designed to integrate health, social and education services at sites in or near schools. The Department of Education issued an "Invitation to Participate in a Partnership to Develop COZs" to all 36 of the states school districts in the fall of 1993. Twenty districts responded and are participating in the initiative.

The R.I. Department of Education used a collaborative planning approach to design the Child Opportunity Zone (COZ) initiative. The Department alone cannot treat the complex issues involved with the social and educational service needs in totality. However, the Department recognized the relationship that exists between the social service needs of school-age children and their capacity to get the most from the education available to them. The Department rallied the social service providers within the state, businesses, non-profit agencies, and (as noted above) 20 of the State's school districts into a collaborative effort to orchestrate the diverse and specialized foci of these agencies into one common cause: to collectively enhance the quality of life and educational experience

of the State's schoolchildren and their families. Despite still being in its early stages, the program is serving as a model for other collaborative initiatives being considered throughout the State.

Emerging Collaboratives

The Rhode Island Children's Crusade (RICC), Brown University's Campus Compact, the Feinstein Foundation, and public schools across the State are joining forces to serve the needs of the community through scholarships to underprivileged but promising students (Feinstein), scholarships for community involvement and long term commitment to achievement (RICC), collegiate-level community volunteer programs (Brown University's Campus Compact), and local projects conducted by public school sponsored programs throughout the city.

The Providence Center offers both shelter and mental health services for the homeless. Brown University, in collaboration with the University of Rhode Island and Travelers Aid have set up a program to provide medical services for the homeless. The Rhode Island Placement Coalition matches employment needs of businesses to skills of disabled persons. The Community College of Rhode Island , Bryant College, the Urban League of Rhode Island, and local businesses have joined forces to offer educational opportunities to persons who are marginally making a living designed to sharpen skills needed to become more productive and valuable to businesses. Bryant College started an innovative program in collaboration with the State's unemployment agency to train unemployed persons to become entrepreneurs. The Providence Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Providence Public School system recently initiated a school to work program for children exiting the system and adults who need remedial basic skills training.

Partnerships, Coalitions, and Collaborations

As described in Chapter 18, the proposed activities for Enterprise Community funding all require multiple partners. In the Providence community-based strategic planning process, people are talking and working together who historically were on opposite sides of issues. Issues and solutions have begun to converge and as a result the way is ready for cooperation. The selection of the four program clusters make it clear that Providence sees jobs and work in the neighborhoods as the keystone to revitalization. Jobs set the stage for livable neighborhoods in the targeted areas.

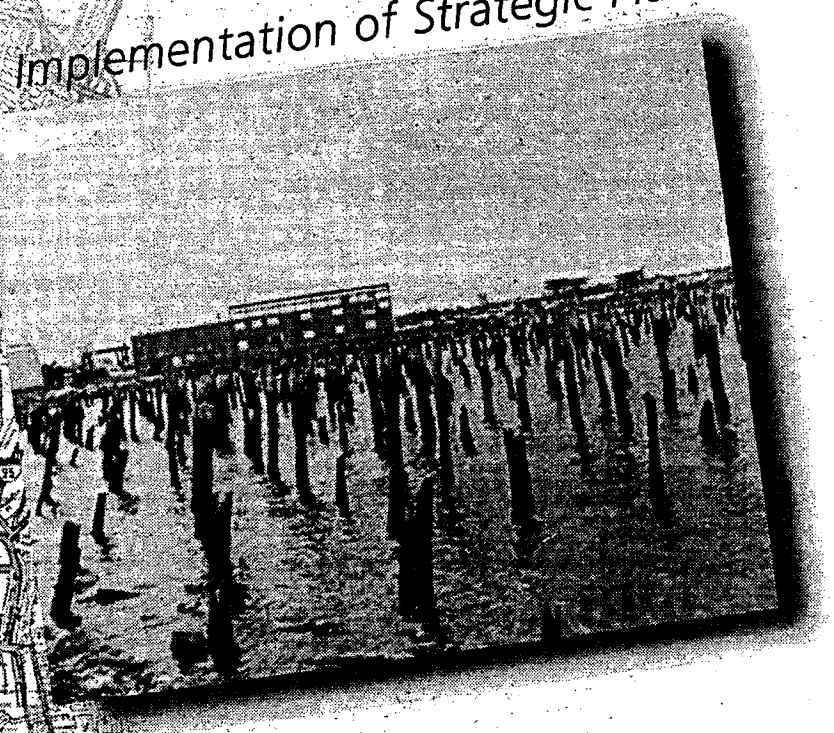
Job Creation. The focus is on more jobs which requires a rethinking of the means of achieving such an end. In the categorical approach to job training, each player did their piece and then passed the client to the next step in the process. The medical enterprise zone will require that partners with the competence to work together each day to achieve results of job creation. The hospitals and ancillary health services are the economic engines. Job training provides the technical know how and supports. Neighborhood groups weave the fabric among the people. Community activists raise the questions of inclusion and empowerment. Each of these, and other competencies, are required to be at the table of change at the same time.

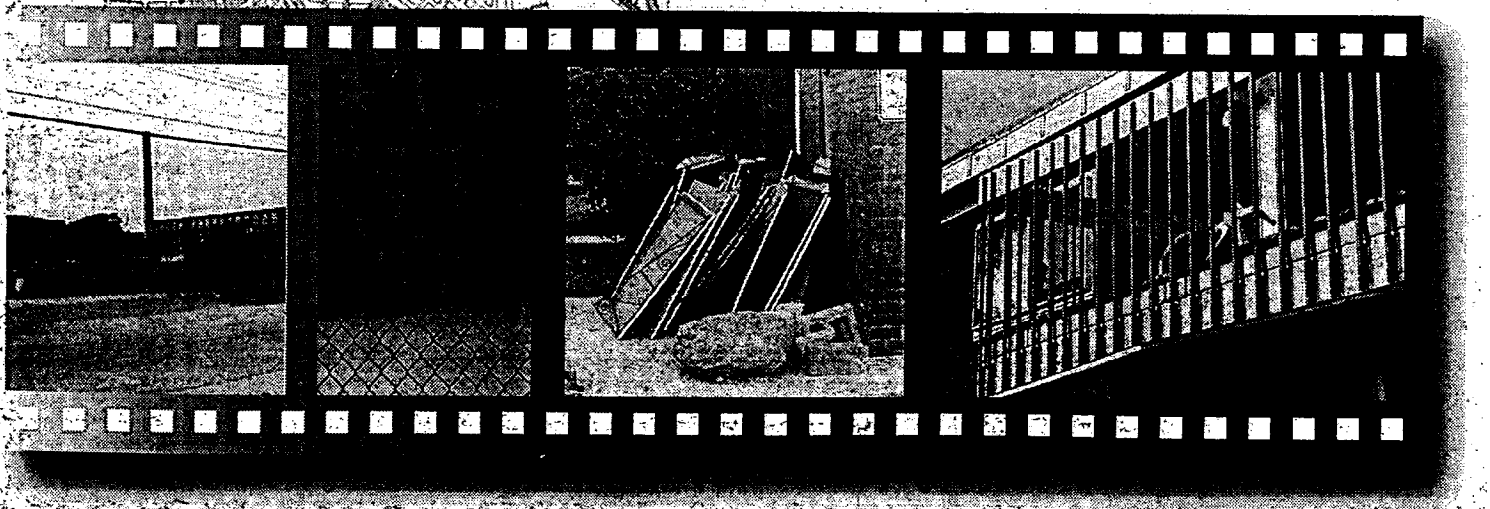
Neighborhood Economic Development. The focus is access to technical and financial resources. With this initiative, the banks and micro lenders have to learn to see the inner city through each other's eyes. The thread of this initiative is combining technical and financial resources toward business development and retention in the zones. Historically, the players involved have worked independently of each other. Targeting the resources will require some new ways of working.

Workforce Training. The focus is on producing a work ready individual. Given the complexity of client issues surrounding that outcome, the tradition in job training is to continue to provide learning experiences (and not work) to help the client improve their skill and employability but to do so in isolation from a an actual job. The projects in this initiative will require a reframing of the process so that some form of actual work leads the learning process and that learning be in the form of on the job training and not instruction in an isolated classroom. This premise will require the partners to work differently and to see that the focus is in the result -- a skilled worker who can live and work in her neighborhood.

Education. The focus is on an educated, literate young person and adult. In an expanded child opportunity zone the community centers and the schools begin to forge broader networks of support around the school and students. This requires every conceivable specialty to be involved, but not doing their own thing. Rather, each player must be part of a seamless web of service with the educational needs of the learner as the focus and the process of the school system as the driver.

Barriers to Successful Implementation of Strategic Plan





Chapter 21
Barriers to Successful Implementation of Strategic Plan

After forming an initial ideal vision for the City of Providence in the year 2010, the *ProVision* task forces moved on to identify some of the key needs in their policy areas and the barriers that prevent our vision from becoming a reality. Although each task force dealt with separate substantive areas, several common problems have emerged:

1. **Lack of coordination among existing programs.** Although each of the task forces discovered a surprising number of ongoing initiatives throughout the city and state, there was almost universal frustration with our inability to better coordinate these efforts. Ten of the twelve task forces selected this problem as a key need or barrier to be addressed.
2. **Stronger community outreach and participation.** After the concern for better coordination, the next most pressing need was for more public participation. Eight of the twelve task forces raised the issue of outreach, either to inform the public about current activities, or to solicit input to help shape public policies. In addition, several groups pointed out the importance of education as a means of informing people about their specific policy areas.
3. **Funding or taxation issues.** Eight task forces raised concerns over financial issues. This includes both insufficient levels of funding, and categorical funding that does not allow for flexibility in the way funds can be used to meet local needs.
4. **Vacant and abandoned buildings.** Six of the twelve task forces prioritized vacant and abandoned buildings (both residential and commercial) as a major concern. However, it was also noted that these structures could be a potential resource for historic preservation or affordable housing.
5. **Expanding the job base.** Five of the task forces expressed the concern that no matter what else happens, Providence will not work as a livable city unless there are enough jobs. Particularly noteworthy was the fact that all four of the task forces in the "Creating Economic Opportunities" cluster selected job creation as a crucial issue.

Summary of Task Force Meetings:

What are the major barriers to making Providence a livable city?

Task Force	Barrier #1	Barrier #2	Barrier #3
Job Creation	Lack of comprehensive development plan	Lack of vision or leadership	Tangible property tax
Downtown	"Big Ticket" Project Mentality	Lack of coordination between projects	Poor image of downtown
Neighborhood Economic Development	Lack of independent ombudsman at city hall to help businesses with loans, regulations, licensing, etc. (government moves too slow and inefficiently)	No plan for neighborhood economic development	1) City ignores its ethnic assets 2) No priority to firms that pay "living wage"
Workforce Training	Transportation	Poor outreach to inform public about available programs	Better connection between people, training, placement, and jobs
Housing	Conservative bank lending standards	Fragmented financial resources	Poor school system scares away the middle class
Arts, Culture, & Historic Preservation	Lack of marketing and promotion of the arts by city and state	Why isn't art a bigger business?	1) Building codes make rehab difficult 2) Impotent tax credits
Public Safety	Lack of awareness & cultural sensitivity	Lack of personnel	Poor use of insurance premium percentages, which are currently placed in general state treasury instead of being dedicated to a public safety fund
Urban Fabric	Tax title procedure exasperates abandoned housing program	Inability to replace infrastructure as needed	1) Citizen apathy, poor information 2) Insufficient Code/zoning enforcement

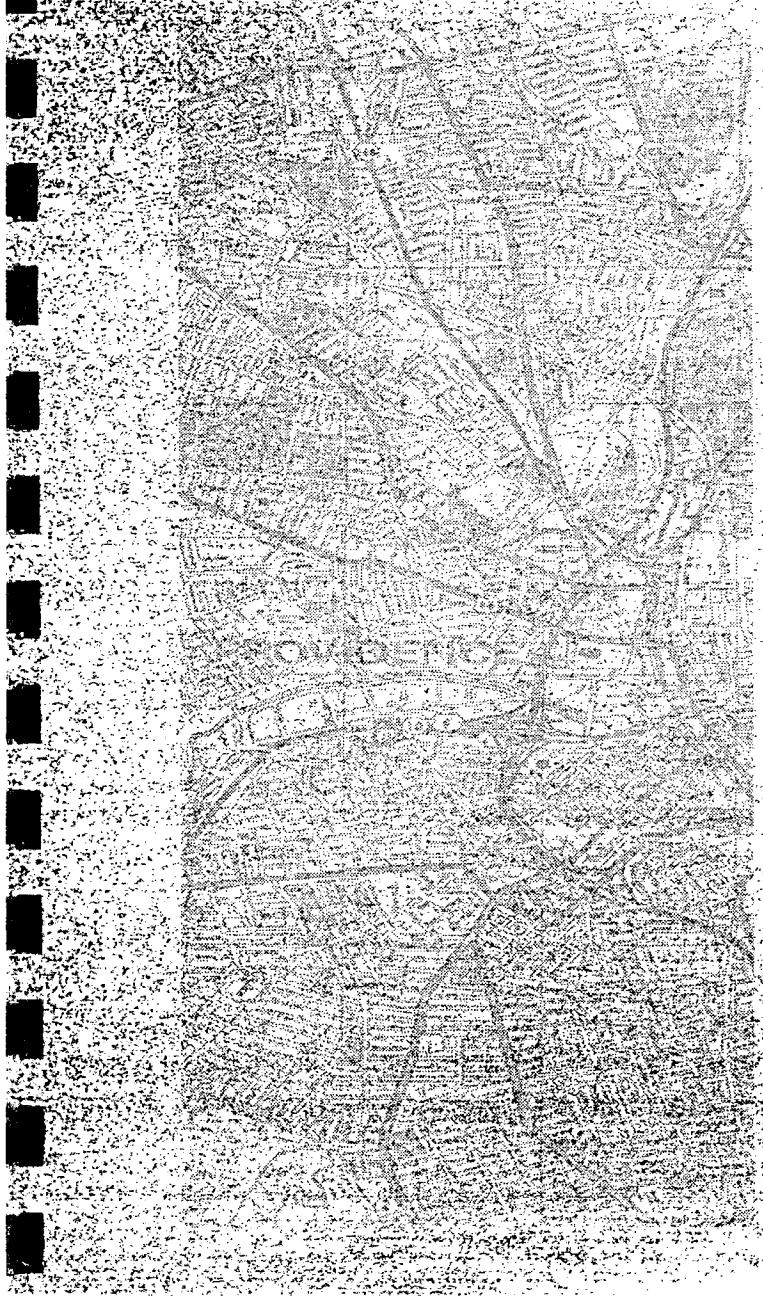
Summary of Task Force Meetings, cont'd:

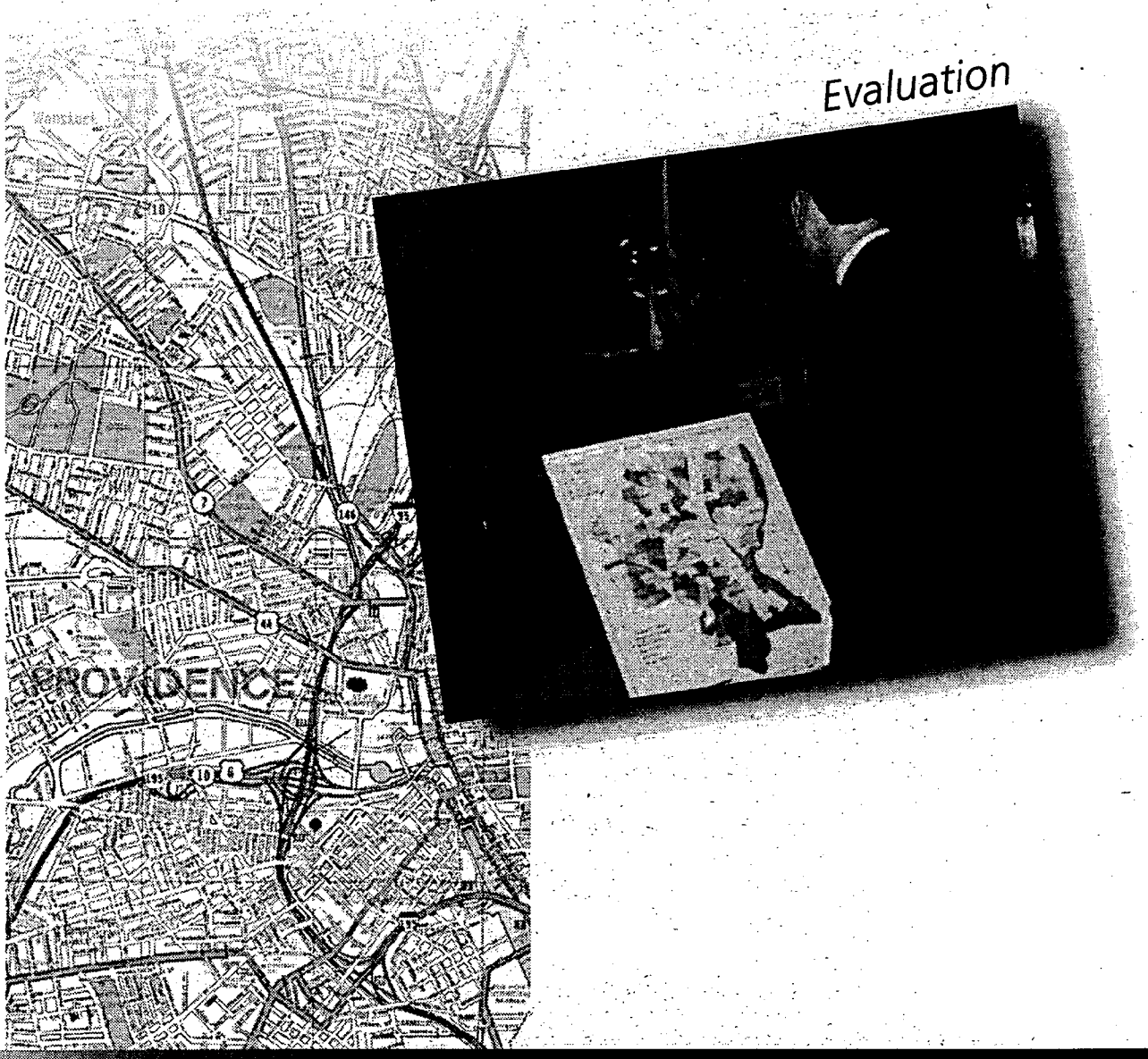
Task Force	Barrier #1	Barrier #2	Barrier #3
Substance Abuse	Lack of credentialed, bilingual, Substance Abuse counselors	Drug offenders are sent to jail with no treatment plan	1) Funding (GPA cuts) 2) Declassification of substance abuse as illness 3) Denial by community & users
Education	Lack of publicity and accountability	Disconnection of home and school due to federal integration requirements and inefficient local busing	Poor coordination between different reform efforts and between the school system and the public
Supporting Families	Categorical, inflexible funding	No serious commitment to community participation by federal, state, and local agencies	Issues of confidentiality in shared information systems and neighborhood-based social service provision
Youth Development	Lack of coordination at the federal level	Citizen apathy	Transportation

Surprisingly, most of the barriers identified by the task forces focused on the state and local level, especially regarding issues of communication and promoting a more active civic culture in Providence. Therefore, at this time in the strategic planning process, the City of Providence is not requesting any specific waivers from the federal government.

However, as implementation of our plan proceeds with the development of more detailed programs and with the formation of more collaboratives, we anticipate encountering statutory and regulatory barriers to innovation. As the need arises, the City of Providence will make a formal request for waivers.

Part VI ***Evaluation and Assessment***




Evaluation
PROVIDENCE

Chapter 22
Monitoring and Evaluation

Introduction and Overview

The citizens of Providence have molded an exciting vision for the future of Providence. Defining a shared vision, setting goals and measuring results will lead to a better future. The latter is particularly important because what gets measured tends to get done. We have accomplished the most difficult task of community-based strategic planning, agreeing on what needs to be done; now we must measure our progress. In this chapter we outline the baseline assessment and benchmark indicators that we will be using to gauge our progress and discuss the structure, process, and procedures that will be used in monitoring, oversight, and evaluation of our strategic plan.

Baseline Assessment and Benchmark Indicators

Adopting a set of indicators to monitor progress toward community goals is not an original concept. Similar versions of benchmark indicators are used in several cities across the country, most notably Jacksonville, Charlotte, Dayton, and Portland, and in a number of states, including Minnesota and Oregon. Several other states have also taken the beginning steps toward the implementation of a benchmarking system. Minnesota's experience with benchmarking has been particularly impressive. According to *Financial World's* 1993 annual ranking of states by quality of management, Minnesota jumped from tenth to third out of fifty states (Rhode Island was ranked 35th). The evaluators noted that Minnesota's implementation of a system of indicators to measure progress towards established goals called Minnesota Milestones led to their increased effectiveness and efficiency.

Indicators, unlike traditional economic indicators, cover the wide range of diverse categories which when combined determine our quality of life. Without an instrument to guide our collective efforts, policy makers and participants in the revitalization of Providence may have the tendency to become tunnel visioned and adopt too narrow of a focus, or set unrealistically low goals.

The adoption of a set of indicators which captures our vision paints the picture we have agreed upon that will facilitate the longevity of our efforts. They will provide the medium which communicates progress made toward our vision. Most importantly, they measure outcomes, not inputs. Benchmarks can be established to realistically pace our journey to our vision. Positive trends can be noted, highlighted and duly recognized while the emergence of negative trends can be acted upon to reverse or minimize the impact of future problems. They provide a long term orientation—a vital ingredient to ultimate success of any program.

Indicators are simple to implement. The vision drives the indicators. Benchmarks are established that will reflect our vision. They are expressed as a target for each indicator to be reached by a specific year. Indicators are chosen that will gauge our progress toward our goals. Next, historic information is gathered for each indicator where feasible and practical. Analysis can be made of current trends and may help to refine the vision. Priorities can then be made in order to facilitate an efficient and agreed upon plan that will lead to goal achievement. As time goes on and the indicators measure progress, our plan can be adjusted. The indicators

ultimately serve as a constant diagnostic tool that provides citizens and policymakers with the results of their efforts.

Examples of the types of indicators that can be used to monitor progress in Providence include the following:

Economic

- Number of business startups
- Number of persons that are unemployed
- Number of persons that are employed
- Number of persons applying for a form of public assistance
- Number of abandoned/vacant commercial properties
- Office market vacancy rate

Civic Culture

- Percentage of eligible voters who vote in local elections
- Number of people who volunteer
- Attendance at community planning meetings

Education

- Percentage of high school graduates who go on to college
- Percentage of high school graduates who are working within six months
- Percentage of students who start but do not complete high school
- Number of people who complete a job training program
- Percentage of job training program graduates who are working within six months

Urban Fabric

- Bus ridership per 1,000 people
- Number of metered parking spaces downtown
- Number of city public recreation sites
- Miles of maintained greenway
- Number of trees planted

Housing

- Number of people with subsidized housing
- Number of vacant/abandoned housing units
- Number of buildable, vacant lots
- Number of people receiving emergency shelter

As the National Civic League has demonstrated, benchmarking and performance monitoring indicators need not always be quantitative. The Civic League has developed the Civic Index, which is designed to assist communities in identifying and assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and then developing collaborative responses to build on their strengths and shore up their weaknesses. Examples of the types of items tracked in the Civic Index include the capacity of neighborhood and civic groups, whether government works collaboratively with other sectors, the types of mechanisms for promoting inter-neighborhood cooperation and informal dispute-resolution, the extent to which community foundations work together on local problems and the extent to which they target their investments to local problems, the degree to which citizens and key stakeholders in the community are involved in community planning, the willingness of key leaders to take a long-term as opposed to a short-term view on policy issues, and the ways in which communities demonstrate their pride, to name but a few. The items included in the Civic Index provide an important and appropriate inventory for the key skills, competencies, and tools communities need to effectively solve their problems and move forward. As part of its community-based strategic planning process, Providence is committed to using the Civic Index as a diagnostic tool to assist in assessing its own strengths and weaknesses.

Using GIS to Guide Urban Revitalization. In 1993, The Providence Plan began developing a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) on the city of Providence and its neighborhoods, with an emphasis on people-oriented data related to the problems of persistent poverty and neighborhood decline. While the city had participated in the Census Bureau's User Defined Area Program in both the 1980 and 1990 decennial censuses, there was no comprehensive reference source that planners, policymakers, community-based organizations, and concerned citizens could turn to in order to obtain a detailed portrait of their city or their neighborhood. We felt it imperative, therefore, to develop such a comprehensive data base in order to provide the necessary foundation to move our strategic planning process forward, and to assist a number of city, state, and community-based organizations that were beginning to develop new program initiatives to tackle a number of difficult urban problems.

The information that has been compiled in this system has provided a solid foundation for undertaking the comprehensive community-based strategic planning process that has been used to develop Providence's strategic plan and has lead to a much broader and more deeper understanding of city and neighborhood needs in the areas of housing and community development, economic development, education, employment and training, children and family services, public safety, to name but a few. It will become an even more important tool to monitor our progress and to evaluate the effectiveness of our approaches to community problems.

The Providence Plan's GIS system is based on an enhanced version of the Census Bureau's TIGER/LINE base map and includes a variety of census data for the city at the block, block group, census tract, neighborhood, and ward levels. Most important, The Providence Plan's GIS system includes an extensive collection of data from city and state administrative agencies that has heretofore not been easily accessible, largely due to incompatibilities in the units for which data is recorded and because of concerns regarding confidentiality. Agencies that are participating in The Providence Plan's GIS system include the RI Department of Human Services (AFDC, Food Stamps, Medical Assistance households and their characteristics), the RI Department of Health (vital statistics, WIC program participants), the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (child abuse, foster care), the RI Department of Employment and Training (employment and unemployment), the Providence School Department (characteristics of public school students), the Providence Police (crime incidents) and Fire Departments (fires), the Providence Plan Housing Corporation (properties assisted through various PPHC programs), the Providence Housing Authority (public and assisted housing units), and the Providence Department of Inspections and Standards (vacant and abandoned properties).

Individual record data from databases maintained by these and other agencies have been address matched and geocoded, and then aggregated to appropriate units of analysis, generally the census block group. This process allows for a much richer profile of neighborhood needs and conditions than has previously been possible, as this technique allows two barriers to be broken—the lack of uniformity in geographic areas for which data is

maintained (e.g., census tracts, health planning areas, school districts, etc.) and confidentiality (by reporting statistics that represent the aggregation of data from individual records, privacy and anonymity are preserved). In addition, The Providence Plan has geocoded a wide variety of the city's social infrastructure, including locations of schools, hospitals and health centers, police and fire stations, libraries, community centers and recreation facilities, social service agencies, to name but a few. It is now possible, for example, to create a map showing the distribution of babies born to mothers who received no or late prenatal care, and overlay on that map the locations of the city's hospitals and community health centers along with the public transit route structure (see map 22-1). Such maps instantly allow one to readily identify high need/low accessibility neighborhoods.

Although The Providence Plan GIS is only a little more than a year old, it has already had a significant impact on raising the level of discussion and deliberation on public policy problems relating to persistent poverty and neighborhood decline. Further, The Providence Plan GIS has not been used simply as an academic planning tool, but has had a direct effect on program formulation and evaluation, and has influenced the allocation of millions of dollars in existing and new public funds. Examples include the siting of neighborhood-based family centers, housing rehabilitation assistance, recreation and open space enhancements, community policing, arson prevention, to name but a few.

To promote broader dissemination of the information that has been compiled in this unique data base, and to encourage the key stakeholders in the community to gain a better understanding of the city and its neighborhoods, a Providence Neighborhood Fact Book was created. The data presented in this reference source are presented in a variety of formats (tables, charts, graphs, maps) for several levels of geography. The databook includes information on several topics related to urban revitalization, including the economic base, population, race and ethnicity, education, employment, income, housing, crime, and health, among others. In addition, more than 100 theme maps are included that show the spatial distribution, primarily at the census block group level, for a variety of demographic, social, and economic characteristics of the population, crime data, and several indicators related to the quality of the city's housing stock. Also, a map is included for each of the city's 34 public schools, showing the location of each school and a point distribution of each student that attended that school during the 1993 school year, with a different symbol used for each racial and ethnic group.

The Providence Plan GIS system has been nationally recognized for its design, function, and use as the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association designated The Providence Plan as runner-up to the winner of the Corporate Systems Award in its 1994 Exemplary Systems in Government Awards Competition.

An important contribution of The Providence Plan GIS has been its ability to dispel myths and misimpressions about the city and its neighborhoods. These include racial composition, distribution of public assistance households, crime, as well as the distribution of resources, particularly housing assistance. As Providence moves forward in the implementation of its strategic plan, GIS will be an important tool that will allow us to monitor our progress, assess our performance, and finetune our strategies to address the city's most pressing problems.

Monitoring, Oversight and Evaluation of Strategic Plan Activities

One of the most critical aspects of the success of Providence's implementation of its strategic plan will be the structures and processes put in place for monitoring, oversight, and evaluation of the activities included in the strategic plan, particularly those that are assisted with federal Enterprise Community funds.

In an effort to better integrate the grass-roots, community-based strategic planning process with the more formal lines of authority and responsibility in local governance, an Enterprise Community Monitoring and Oversight Committee will be established, consisting of representatives from city and state government, the private sector, and the community. The committee, which will be co-chaired by the Director of the Department of Planning and Development and the Executive Director of The Providence Plan, will include the following members:

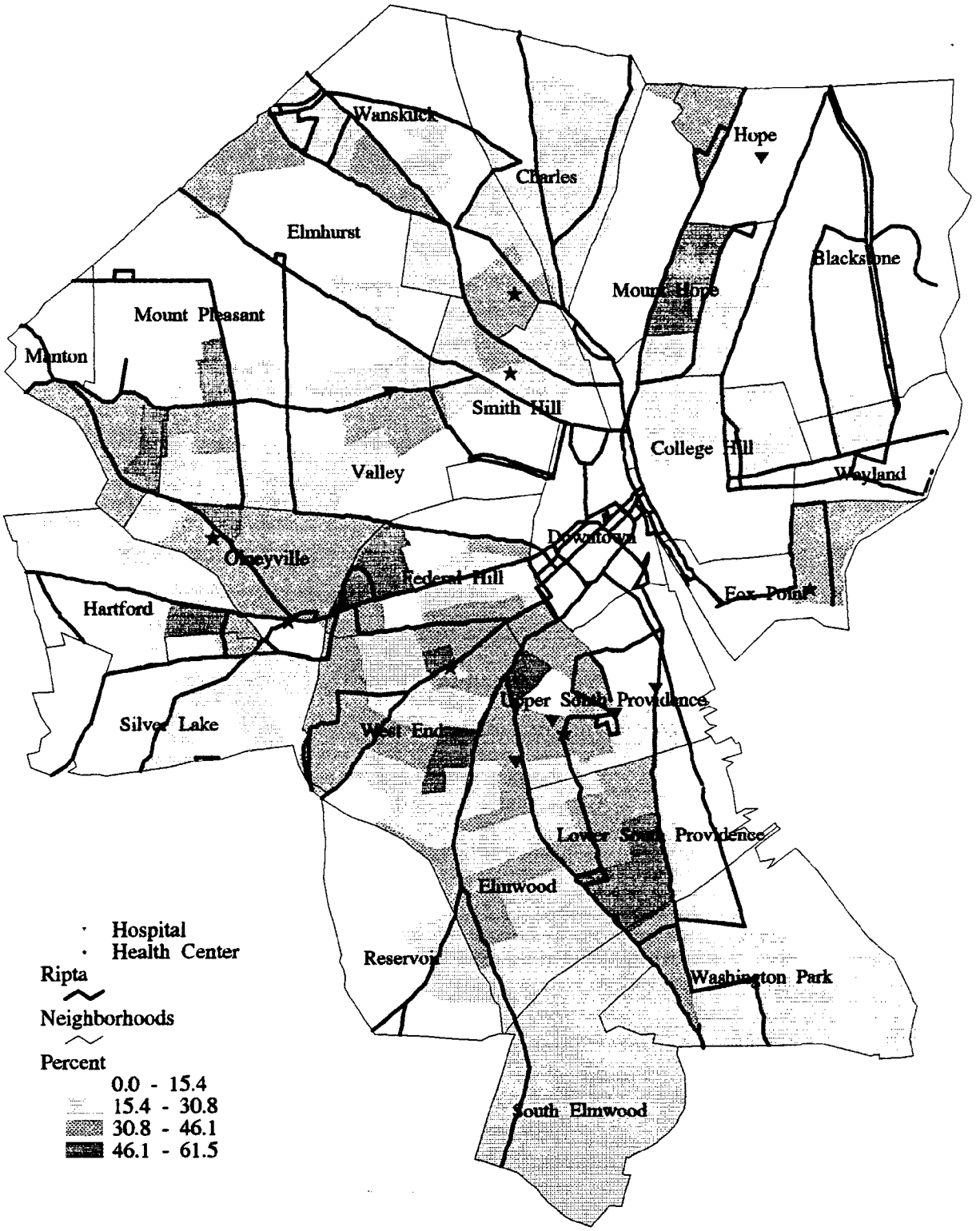
- Chair, City Council Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning

- Chair, City Council Finance Committee
- Two members appointed by the City Council, preferably one member from the private sector and one from a community-based organization or neighborhood resident association within the Enterprise Community boundaries
- Two members appointed by the Mayor, preferably one member from the private sector and one from a community-based organization or neighborhood resident association within the Enterprise Community boundaries
- Two members appointed by the Governor, preferably one member from the private sector and one from a community-based organization or neighborhood resident association within the Enterprise Community boundaries
- Director or designee, Rhode Island Department of Human Services
- Director or designee, Rhode Island Department of Economic Development
- Director or designee, Department of Environmental Management
- Director, Providence-Cranston Private Industry Council/Regional Employment and Training Board
- Chairman of the Board, The Providence Plan
- Executive Director, Providence Plan Housing Corporation
- Executive Director, Providence Housing Authority
- Superintendent, Providence Public Schools
- Chair, Community Centers Association
- Representative, Rhode Island Hospital

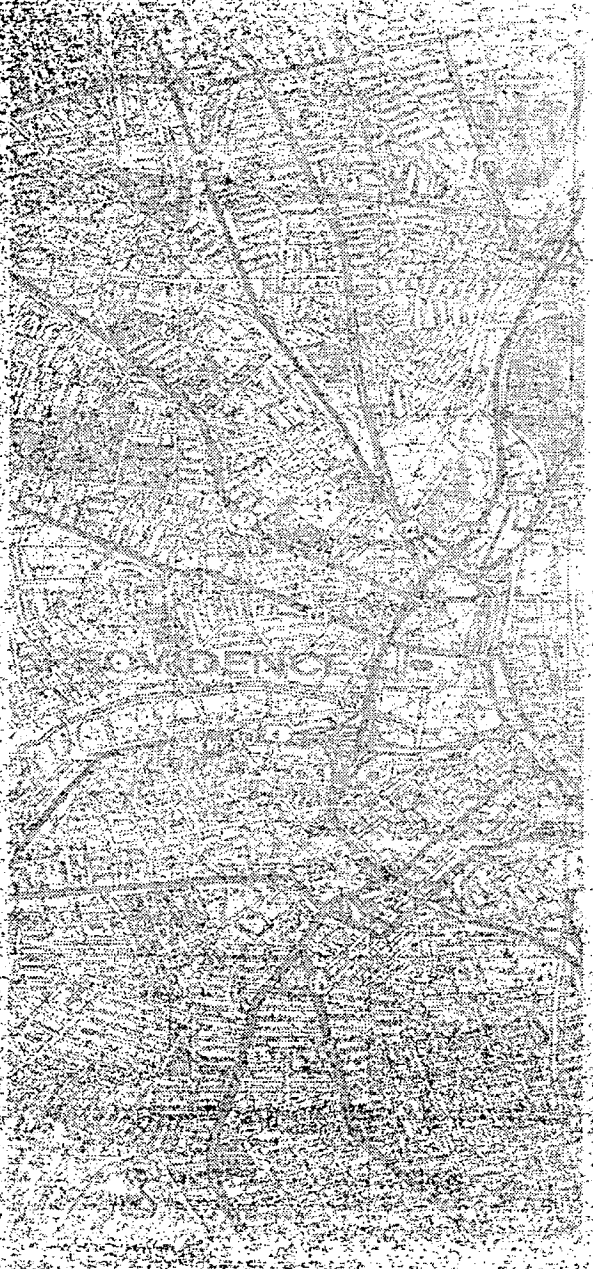
The committee will meet periodically to review and monitor the progress of Enterprise Community-funded programs and activities. The committee may suspend funding for a program or activity if it has determined that the program or activity is not making satisfactory progress, and if all efforts at remediation fail, then Enterprise Community funds allocated to that program or activity may be reallocated to another activity, preferably for one within the same program category, and for an activity or program that is consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

In addition, the *ProVision* Steering Committee that was created to guide the community-based strategic planning process used in the preparation of Providence's community-based strategic plan will continue to meet periodically. This group will play a critical role in further developing and enhancing the city's civic infrastructure, particularly in the areas of proactive problem solving, long-term community planning, and strengthening linkages and bonds within and across key sectors of the community.

Map 22-1
Percent of Births with Late or No Prenatal Care, 1989
Providence Census Block Groups



Part VII ***Appendices***

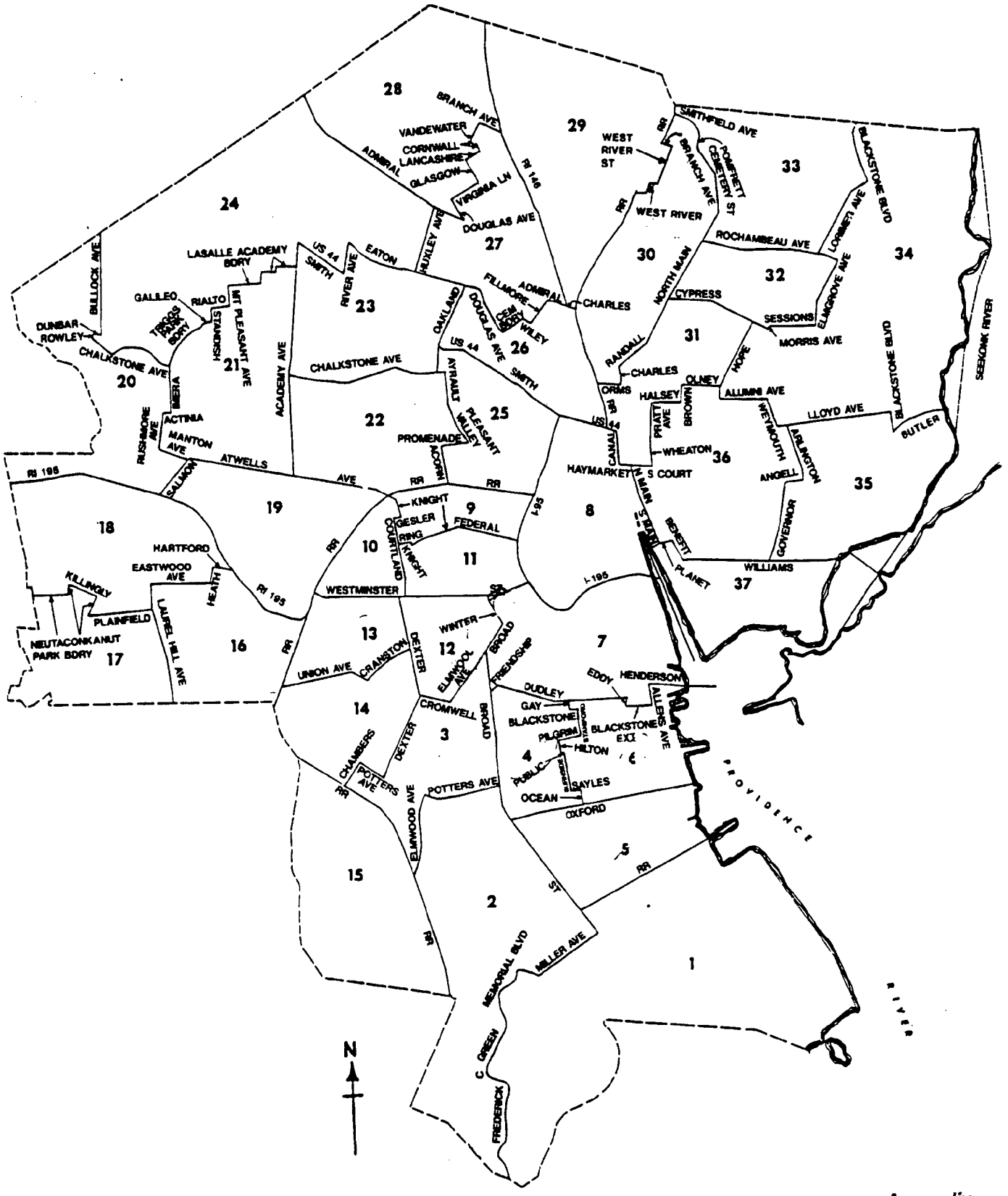


Appendix

ProVision Steering Committee Members

Name	Organization
Mr. William J. Allen	United Way of Southeastern New England
Dr. Thomas J. Anton	Taubman Center for Public Policy, Brown University
Mr. Daniel A. Baudouin	The Providence Foundation
Mr. Irwin Becker	Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services (ENHS)
Mr. Edward Canner	Providence-Cranston Job Training Partnership Association (JTPA)
Mrs. B. Jae Clanton	The Urban League of Rhode Island
Mr. Thomas Deller	City Department of Planning and Development
The Honorable Josephine DiRuzzo	Providence City Council
Ms. Iona Dobbins	Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA)
Mr. James H. Dodge	Providence Gas Company
Mr. Luke Driver	Office of the Mayor
Ms. Alice Engram-Hammed	Olneyville Housing Corporation
Mr. Gordon Evans	Office of the Governor
Mr. Michael Everett	Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)
Ms. Barbara Fields	RI Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Mr. Paul Fitzgerald	The Family Aid Center for Treatment and Support (FACTS)
Mr. Ronald V. Gallo	The Rhode Island Foundation
Mr. Jose Gonzalez	Center for Hispanic Policy and Advocacy (CHISPA)
Mr. Paul R. Gounaris	Providence School Department
Ms. Mary Kozik	Keep Providence Beautiful
Mr. Simon Kue	Hmong United Association of Rhode Island
Ms. Rochelle Lee	RI LISC
Mr. Frederick C. Lohrum	Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank
Peter Mezei, CPA	Lefkowitz, Garfinkel, Champi & DeRienzo
Ms. Asata Msalii-Tigrai	Project BASIC
Ms. Sarah A. Murphy	Smith Hill Center
Mr. George Nee	Rhode Island AFL-CIO
Mr. George C. Neubauer	Boys and Girls Clubs of Providence
Mr. Stephen J. O'Rourke	Providence Housing Authority
Commissioner John Partington	Providence Police Department
Mr. Steven J. Patriarca	Mayor's Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse
Mr. Vidal P. Perez	Family Service, Inc.
Mr. Matthew Powell	Providence Plan Housing Corporation (PPHC)
Mr. H. LeBaron Preston	The Armory Revival Company
Sister Mary Reilly	Dorcas Place
Dr. Gary Sasse	Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC)
Mrs. Jane Sherman	The Providence Plan
Mr. William Shuey	The International Institute of Rhode Island
Mr. Robert A. Silvestre	Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI)
Mr. David Slone	Rhode Island Hospital Foundation
Mr. Sheldon Sollosy	Manpower, Inc.
Mr. Mark Toney	Direct Action for Rights and Equality (DARE)
Mr. Michael Van Leesten	Van Leesten Associates
Mr. William Watkins	Narragansett Electric
Mr. Furchess Wingate	Narragansett Council Boy Scouts of America
The Honorable Balbina Young	Providence City Council

Map A-1
Providence Census Tracts, 1990



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Chapter 10	Affordable Housing Mayor's Office: Isabelle Taft, Mayor's Office: Isabelle Taft, Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation, Keep Providence Beautiful	10-1
Chapter 11	Urban Fabric Keep Providence Beautiful, Nicole Sackley, Keep Providence Beautiful, Keep Providence Beautiful, Keep Providence Beautiful	11-1
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