

WATCHEMOKET SQUARE East Providence Waterfront Gateway



Public Meeting January 15, 2020

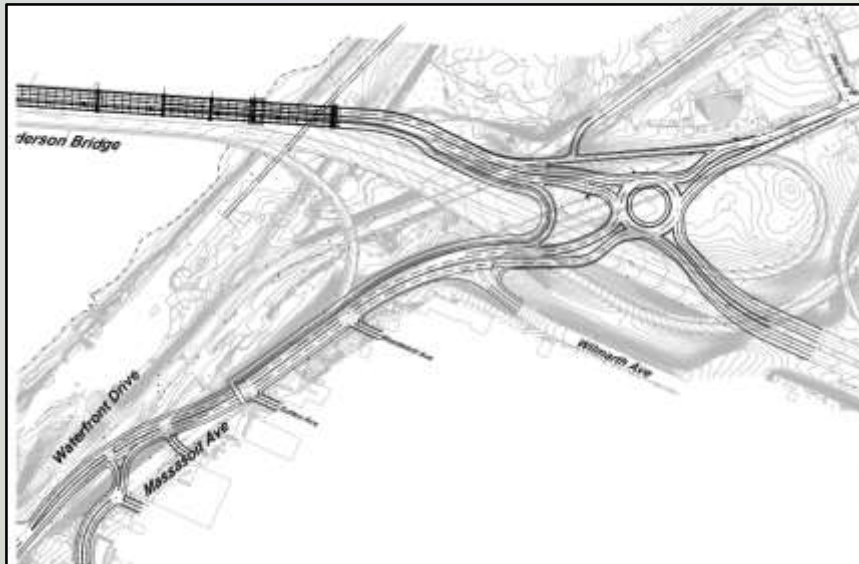


CITY OF
EAST PROVIDENCE RHODE ISLAND

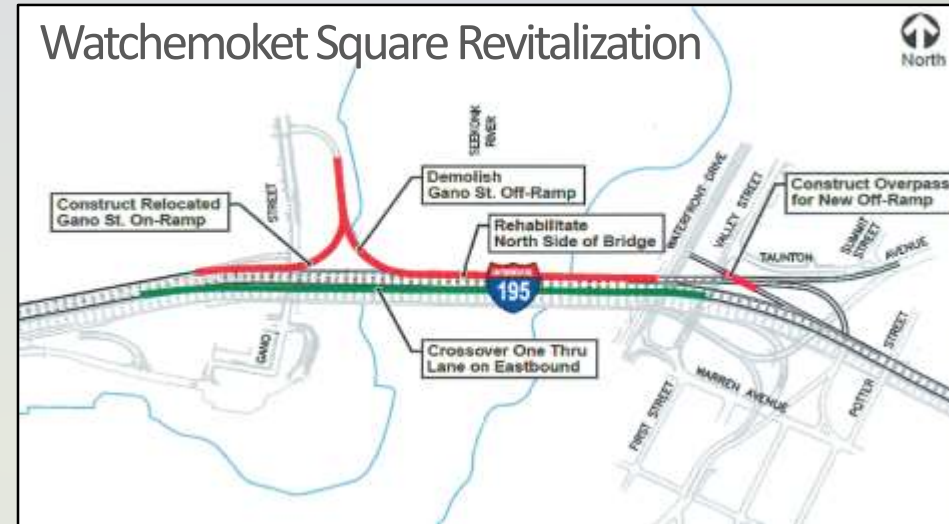


I-195/Washington Bridge Improvements & Henderson Bridge Reconstruction

- ❑ The Washington Bridge Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Project proposes improvements to the Washington Bridge that will dramatically affect economic development initiatives in the City, particularly our waterfront.
- ❑ RIDOT has applied for a \$25 million Federal BUILD grant that will fund a portion of these improvements.

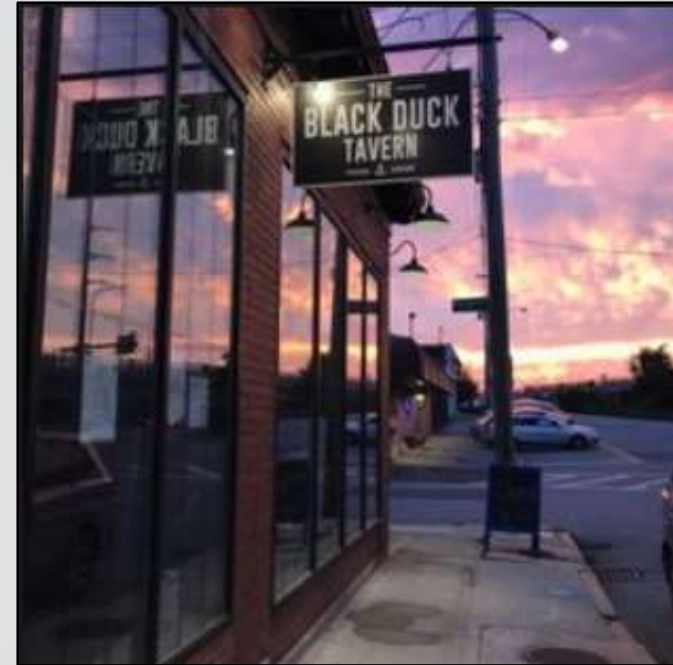


Reconstruction of Henderson Bridge and New Roadway Alignment



Watchemoket Square Revitalization

- ❑ The City has received an EDA grant to fund an urban design study that will develop improvement recommendations in the Watchemoket Square area.
- ❑ Beta Group has been selected as the primary contractor to complete this study that will include:
 - Identifying appropriate locations for welcome and wayfinding and branding signage;
 - Recommendations for potential locations for additional, convenient public parking for visitors to the Square;
 - Recommendations for strengthening connectivity and walkability using a complete streets approach;
 - Working with the Arts Council to incorporate public art in the revitalization and redevelopment efforts;
 - Develop placemaking recommendations that foster and support downtown vibrancy and entrepreneurship.
- ❑ In addition, a \$75,000 Main Street Improvement grant from the Commerce Corporation of Rhode Island will be used to fund some of the installation of the recommended design improvements within the Square.



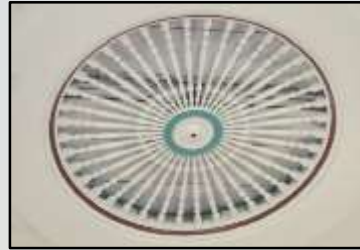
Odd Fellows Hall – Preservation



Recently purchased by a developer (Indigo Holdings) from the City, the property will be developed as a mixed use property containing retail on the first level and office uses on the upper levels.

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Odd Fellows Hall – Interior Shots



The Residences at Bold Point

- ❑ The developer has received approval from the East Providence Waterfront Commission to construct a 12,000 square foot, two story, 22 unit multi-family residential development.
- ❑ The market is identified by the developer as a mix of couples and single professionals who cannot afford the Providence market.
- ❑ Construction of this project will begin this Fall, with anticipated completion of in early 2020.

Current Building



Design Concept



Waterfront Events - Bold Point Park

- ❑ The seasonal concert venue at Bold Point Park has played a dramatic role in energizing the waterfront's entertainment district and has acted as a strong catalyst for additional economic investment in the entertainment and hospitality industries in the Watchemoket Square Area.
- ❑ RI Waterfront Enterprises LLC has purchased the South Quay with plans to develop a more permanent venue somewhat similar to the Rockland Trust Bank Pavilion in Boston.
- ❑ Potential improvements include plans to develop a wind energy laydown area on the Quay that supports the State of Rhode Island's commitment to green energy.



Major Development Sites



South Quay

44 Total Acres

- ❑ Recently acquired by Rhode Island Waterfront Enterprises, LLC.
- ❑ As proposed, the site will feature a permanent local entertainment venue that expands upon the current seasonal Bold Point Park Concert Series.
- ❑ The developer also proposes a green economy deepwater port that will serve the port needs of the offshore wind industry in Rhode Island.



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Major Development Sites

8 Total Acres

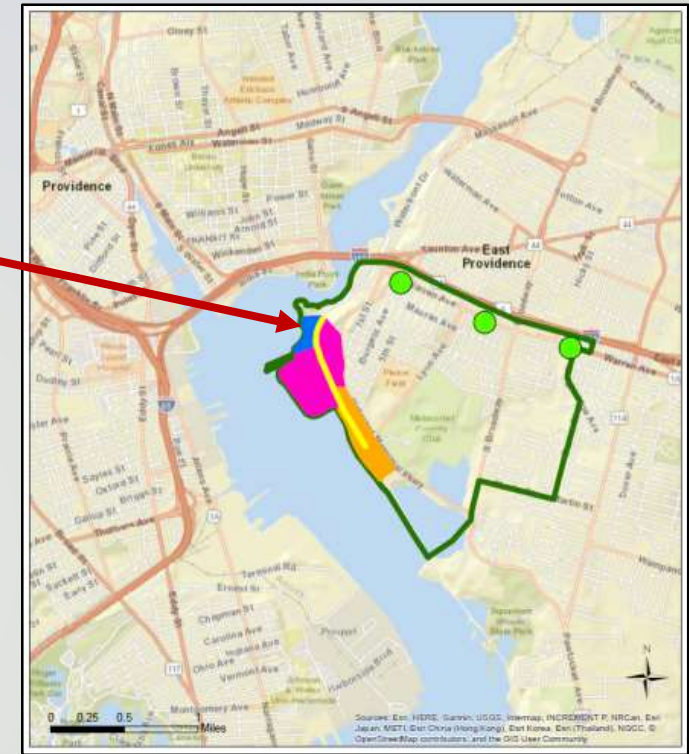
Bold Point Harbor (BPH) Zoning

Potential Development:

- ❑ Mixed Use, restaurant, residential and an entertainment venue.



UNOCAL Property
(the “bowtie”)



The City Council has approved a \$9.37 million dollar Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Agreement to complete public improvements associated with the UNOCAL property at Bold Point.



Major Development Sites



Chevron Site

22.7 Total Acres

Veterans Memorial Parkway (VMP) Zoning

Potential Development:

- Medium/high density residential, mixed use, medical related.

- \$32 million in Tax Increment Financing (**TIF**) has been approved by the City for public infrastructure improvements



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East Providence Waterfront Gateway

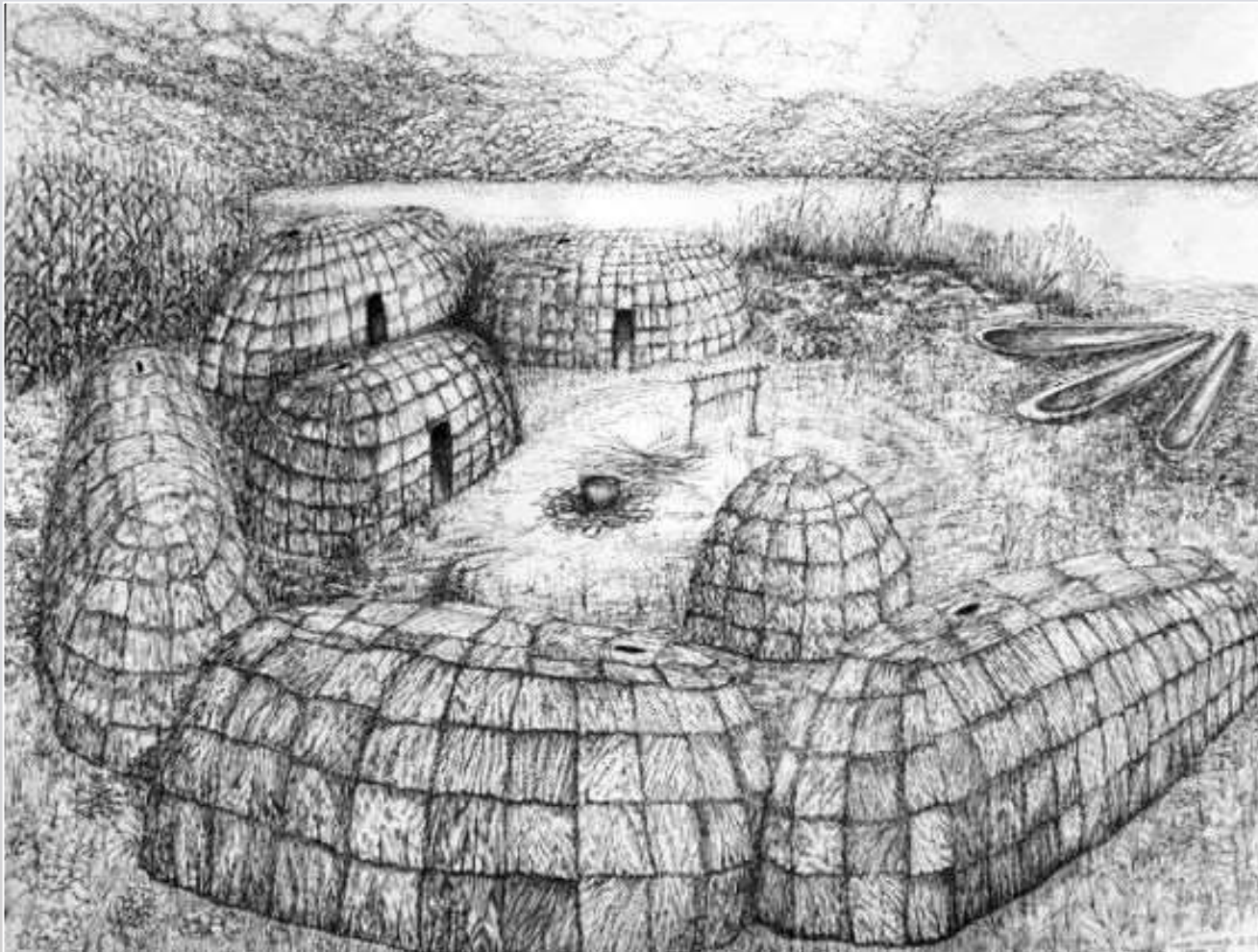
Realizing there is great potential where land and water meet...

Historically this area has always been an
important confluence of sorts...



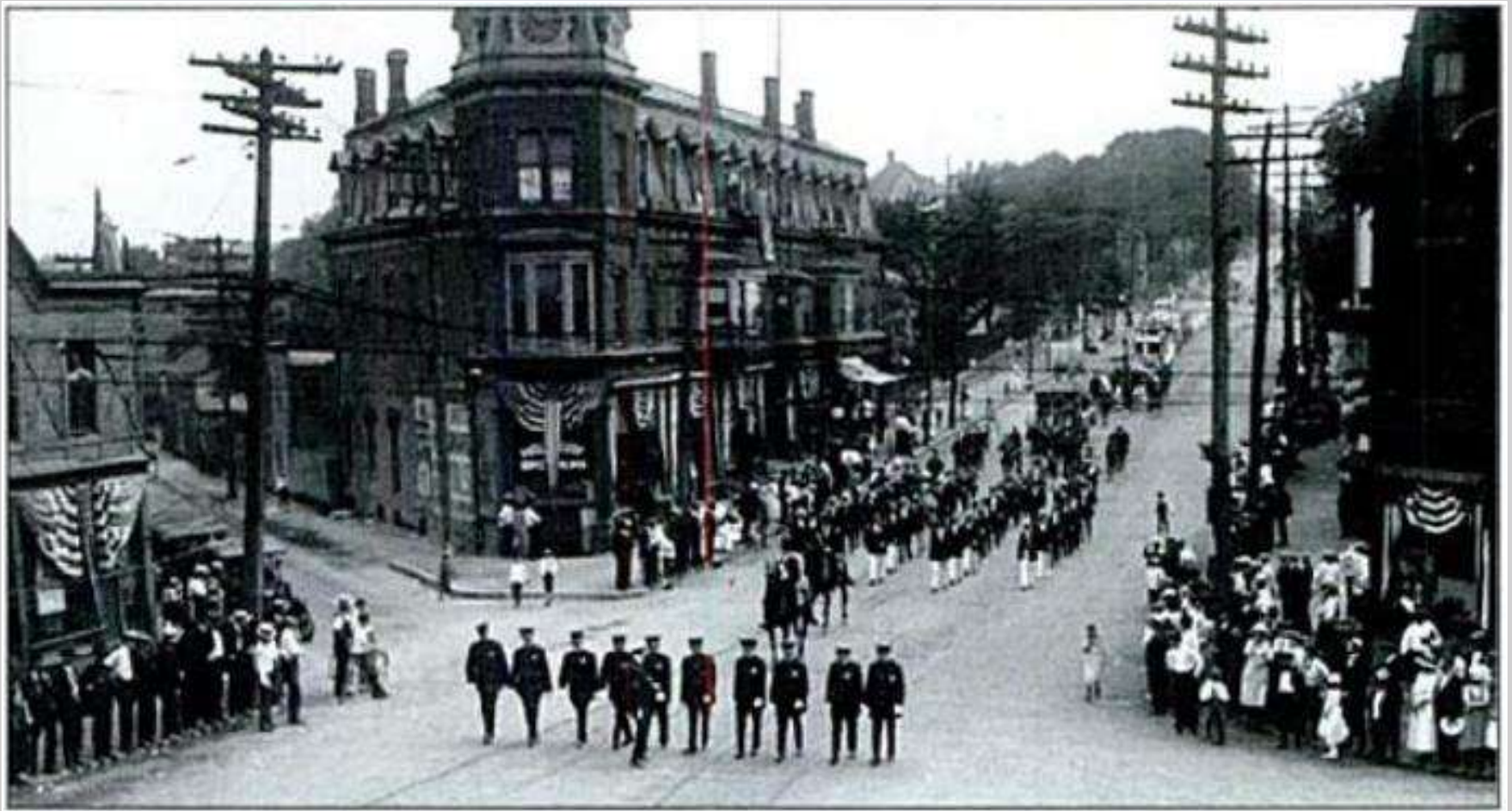
Defining Watchemoket

*American Indian word describing
a proximity to the river and tidal marsh
the feel and smell of where the land and water meet.....*



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Defining Watchemoket
As a place



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Perhaps think of Watchemoket in the future as ...
As confluence... or a gateway ...



Finding Watchemoket starts with finding East Providence ...



... finding East Providence ...



... finding East Providence ...



Finding Watchemoket starts with finding East Providence ...



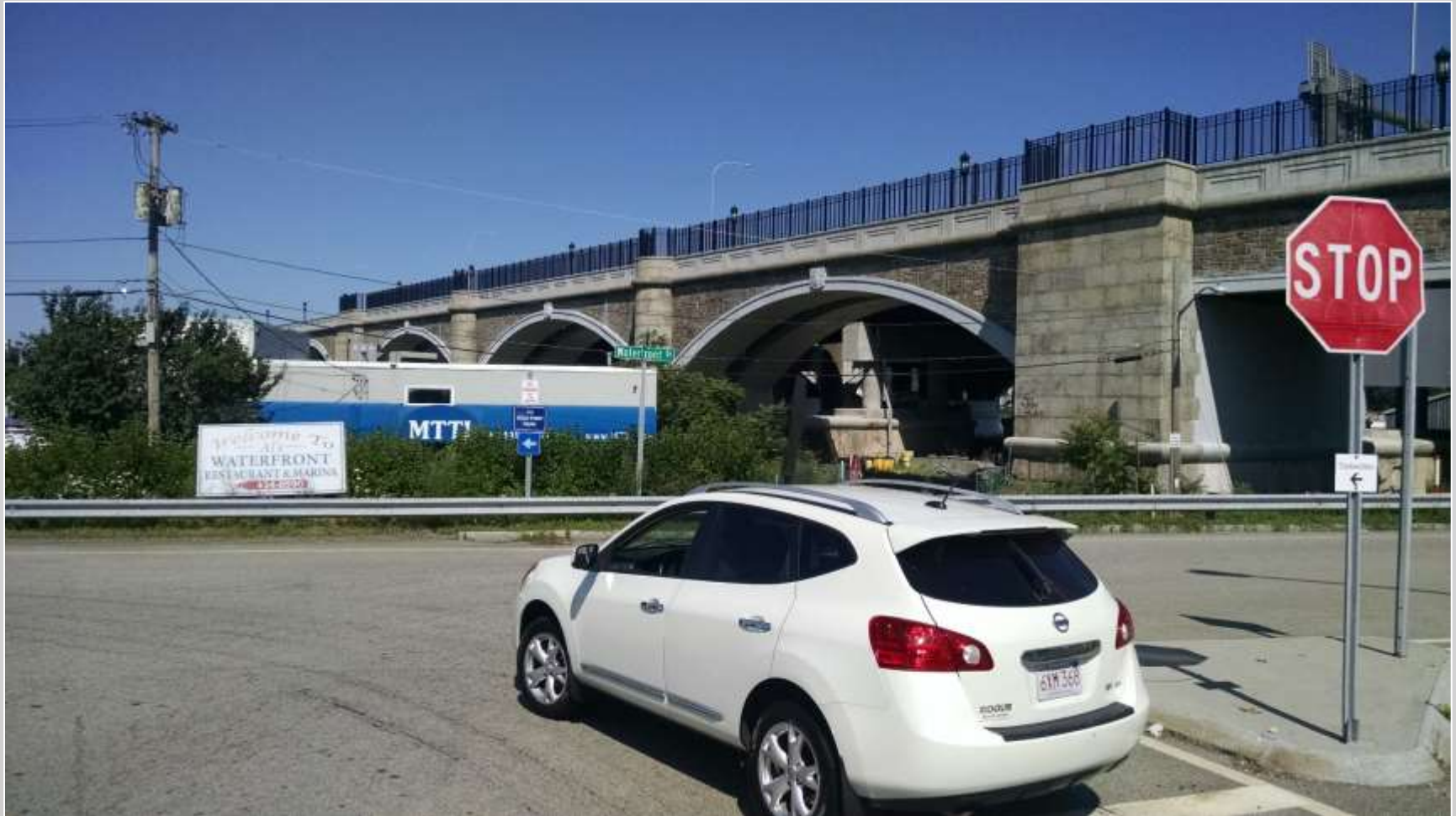
Welcome!.... to Watchemoket Square
The Gateway to the East Providence Waterfront



Here we are ... the Waterfront must be nearby ...



Finding the Waterfront ...



Walking to the Waterfront ...



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East Providence Waterfront Gateway

You can see for more than 100 years it has never been easy ...



... to find the water or feel a cohesive sense of place ...

WATCHEMOKET SQUARE

East Providence Waterfront Gateway

Restoring sense of place, balancing transportation needs,
creating connectivity...

That is what this project seeks to address, thru Placemaking...



Placemaking

Perhaps part art, part science ...
a multi-faceted approach to the planning,
design and management of the public realm ...

*Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration
and potential with the intention of creating public spaces that
promote people's health, happiness and well being.*

An Arts and Entertainment district ...



What is an Arts & Entertainment District?

Where a High Concentration of Cultural, Entertainment (and Recreation) Facilities and Programs are the “**Main Anchor of Attraction**”

Events



Galleries



Artist Housing



Dining



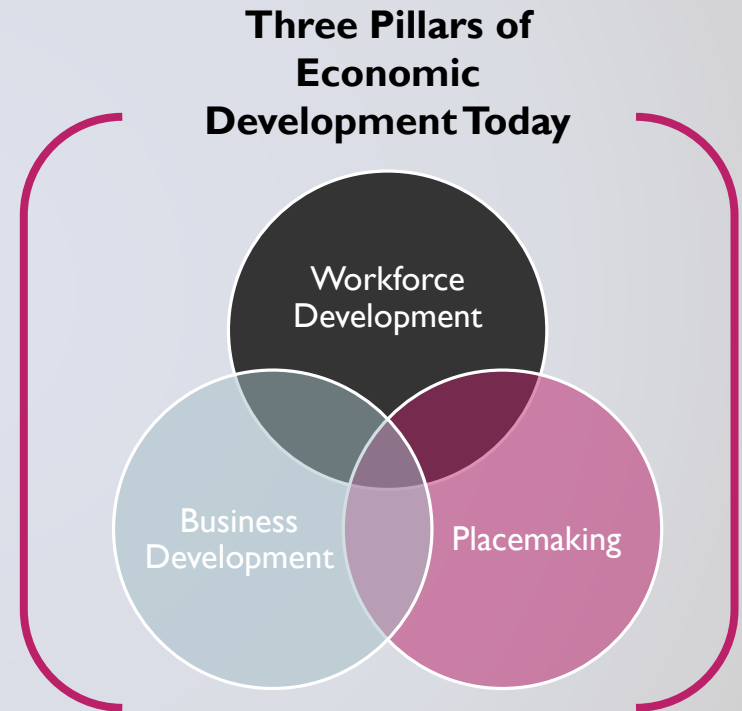
Fun



Why an Arts & Entertainment District?

A tool for economic development:

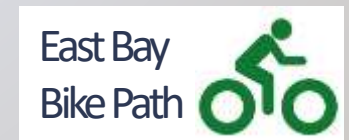
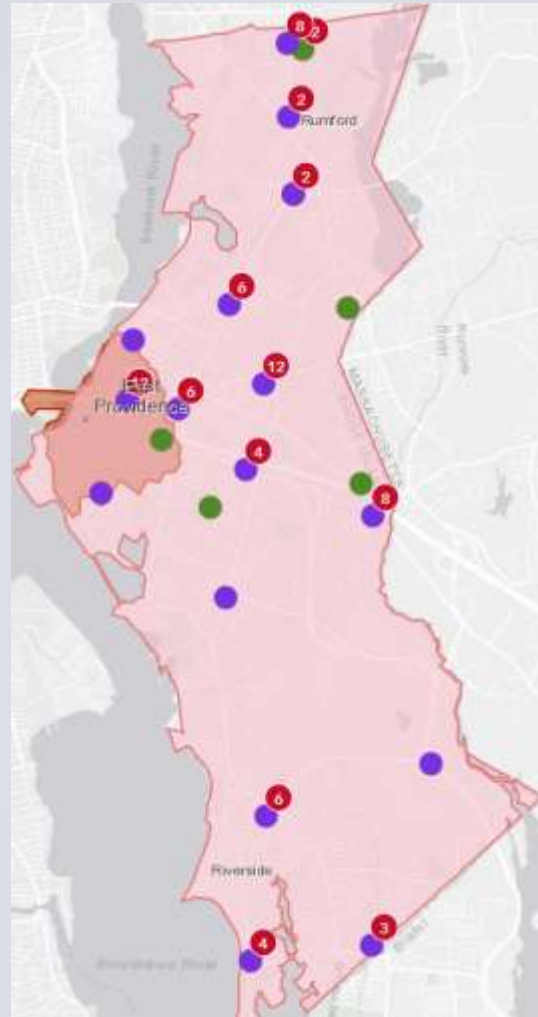
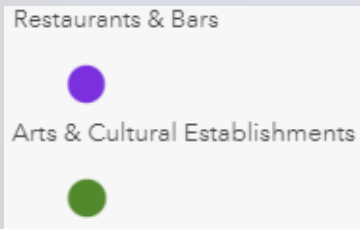
- Supports local artists/entrepreneurship
- Generates tourism
- Attracts businesses
- Attracts residents
- Increases property values



How do we get there?

I. Build off of Assets

- Organizations
- Businesses
- Partnerships
- People
- Amenities



How do we get there?

2. Understand Strengths

- What types of businesses and industries are the largest?
- Which ones are growing the fastest?
 - Restaurants are top growing industry in the City of East Providence
- Which ones are “unusually” concentrated?
 - Musical Groups and Artists 23 times more concentrated in city than U.S.

NAICS	Description	2014	2019	2014 - 2019	2014 - 2019
		Jobs	Jobs	Change	% Change
722511	Full-Service Restaurants	722	805	83	11%
722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	466	507	41	9%
446110	Pharmacies and Drug Stores	171	205	34	20%
443142	Electronics Stores	101	133	32	32%
722515	Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	244	274	30	12%
453310	Used Merchandise Stores	70	92	22	31%
441110	New Car Dealers	229	249	20	9%
441310	Automotive Parts and Accessories Stores	70	87	17	24%
452319	All Other General Merchandise Stores	66	79	13	20%
711130	Musical Groups and Artists	172	181	9	5%

Source: EMSI

Neighborhood		City of East Providence	
NAICS	LQ	NAICS	LQ
Musical Groups and Artists	42.35	Musical Groups and Artists	22.71
Fuel Dealers	6.46	Bowling Centers	3.72
Household Appliance Stores	5.49	Fuel Dealers	3.67
Used Merchandise Stores	5.12	Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	3.08
Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers, and Other Public Figures	3.65	Household Appliance Stores	2.95
Amusement Arcades	3.15	Used Merchandise Stores	2.75
Baked Goods Stores	3.03	Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	2.44
Automotive Parts and Accessories Stores	2.78	Golf Courses and Country Clubs	2.18
New Car Dealers	2.69		
Electronics Stores	2.11		
Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	2.06		
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	2.04		

Source: EMSI

How do we get there?

3. Identify Opportunities

- What business/retail gaps exist?
- What opportunities will future waterfront development create?
- What opportunities does the East Bay Bike path present?

Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4534	\$1,511,813	\$0	\$1,511,813
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$7,386,281	\$4,320,927	\$3,065,354
Special Food Services	7223	\$180,908	\$0	\$180,908
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$244,166	\$362,070	-\$117,904
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$6,961,206	\$3,956,099	\$3,005,107

Source: Esri

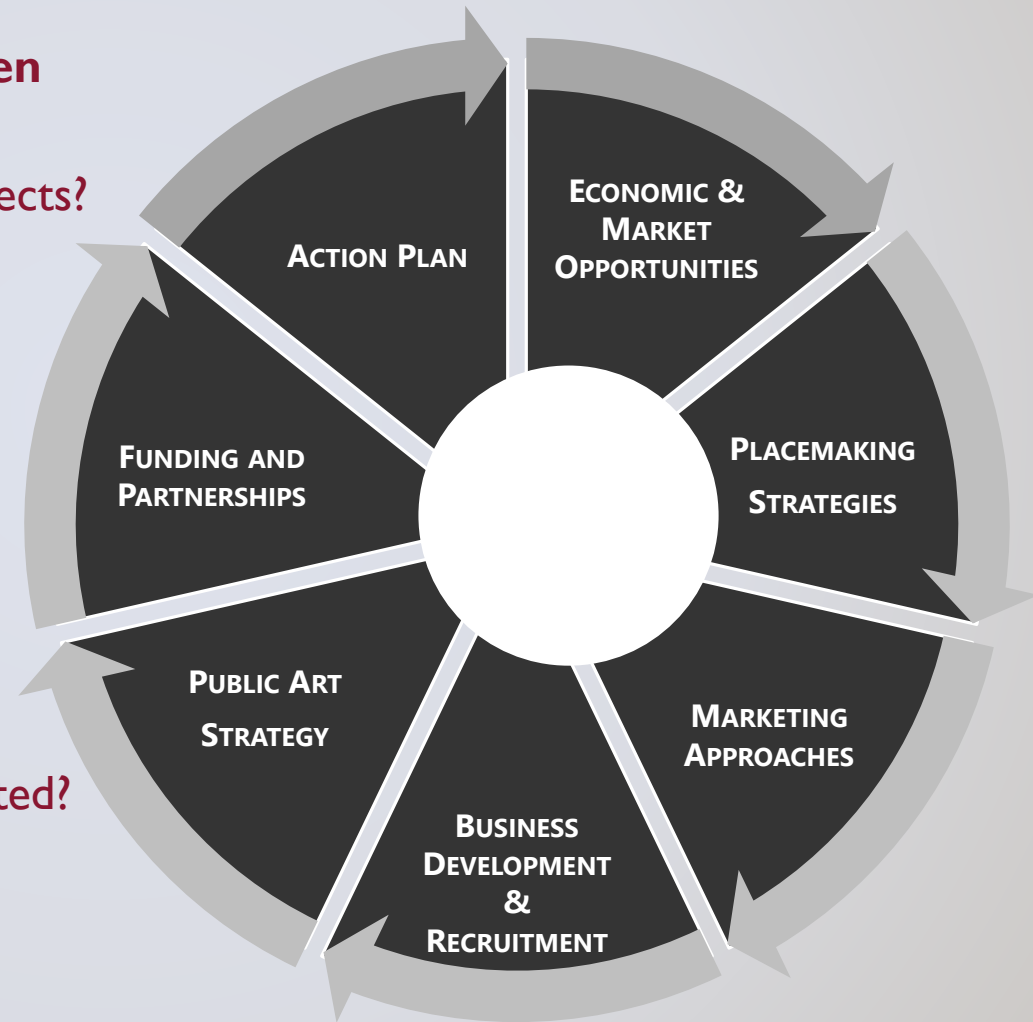
“Retail Gap Analysis”
– neighborhood is underserved
by restaurants



How do we get there?

4. Make a Plan and Make it Happen

- Are there key sites or catalyst projects?
- How should the area be branded/ marketed?
- What funding sources can be tapped into?
- What regulations, policies and programs need to be changed/created?



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Brand Identification, Public Art, Signage and Wayfinding








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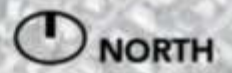
Gateway treatments, Public Art, Pocket Parks ...



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Potential Public Art Areas

- Public Art Nodes 
- Existing Sculpture Park 
- Public Art Spaces 
- District Gateways (Art Opportunities) 
- Bridge Gateways 



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Urban Design elements will reflect
Arts and Entertainment influences



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And enhance the arts and entertainment presence ...



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District design themes could feature industrial and maritime influences



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And help define and create diverse and engaging high quality interconnected public spaces with waterfront access



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Planning for Economic Success within the gateway area includes aligning private and public realm investment with present and future transportation needs and opportunities



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Bringing balanced transportation in the area with possible Bicycle/Pedestrian improvements



First Street



Mauran Avenue

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And planning a multi-modal, coordinated transportation network



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Designed to improve safety, circulation and access to the waterfront, new development sites, outdoor gatherings, public art, attractions and events



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Preliminary thoughts from the 4:00-5:30 Session.....



Preliminary thoughts & Reporting Back from the 4:00-5:30 Session.....



Thank You !

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References

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East Providence Historical Society – <https://www.ephist.org>

Sowams Heritage Area – <https://www.sowamsheritagearea.org>

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<https://planri.com>