

EXISTING CONDITIONS & ANALYSIS REPORT

December 2015

NEWPORT

*open
space*

PARTNERSHIP

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Newport Open Space Partnership

- The City of Newport
- Newport Tree & Open Space Commission
- Aquidneck Land Trust
- Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
- The Newport Tree Society



Newport
Tree and
Open Space
Commission

Aquidneck
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THE NEWPORT TREE SOCIETY



64 Pleasant St, Watertown MA 02472 US
t 617 923 7261 f 617 924 2748 www.sasaki.com

Existing Conditions & Analysis Report

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Summary

TOP NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

The Newport Open Space Partnership has undertaken a comprehensive master plan for the city's parks, open spaces, and trees. The focus of the first phase of the plan is to understand the current state of Newport's assets as well as the needs and desires of the community. This phase has been guided by a Steering Committee and included discussions with Advisory Groups and stakeholders, an inventory of existing public open spaces, literature review, data analysis, the first public meeting, and input from maintenance staff, city departments, and other partners. Throughout, several themes have consistently emerged as key opportunities and needs for the future of Newport's open spaces, parks, and trees:

Equity: How can all parts of the city equally enjoy the great open spaces, recreation elements, and passive open space opportunities? Today, some parts of Newport benefit from a diversity of parks and waterfront spaces; other parts of the city, especially the North End, have much fewer opportunities. These gaps are especially notable when demographics and population size are taken into account. The North End includes 44% of Newport's population and 53% of children and youth under 14. Yet it contains only 9% of the city's park space and less than 15% of the city's playgrounds.

Park Activation and Amenities: How can amenities and programming further enrich the experience of Newport's parks and open spaces? Additional recreation elements, more shade, improved signage, benches, paths, and more could help activate outdoor spaces in Newport. Additionally, can active street life be designed to include cafes and trees that improve the public's experience?

Purpose of the Existing Conditions Report: The Existing Conditions Report documents the existing state of Newport's open space, parks, and trees, highlighting key opportunities, challenges, and other findings. It summarizes the research completed to-date in the project. This document provides the foundations for ideas, frameworks, and strategies developed during the coming phases of the Master Planning process.

This report is based on research and data analysis; an inventory of existing parks and public open spaces; Advisory Groups and stakeholder input; interviews with park and recreation staff; input from the public at the first community meeting; and Steering Committee guidance and input.



Connectivity: How can access to and between parks, the waterfront, and neighborhoods be improved for bicyclists and pedestrians? Today, Newport has only two stretches of bicycle lanes. A more continuous, connected network has been identified as a high need. How can sidewalks, street trees, and other elements contribute to “green streets” that provide connections to parks while also functioning as linear parks with social spaces in their own right?

Living legacy: Newport’s parks reflect the rich history of the city, from colonial harbor to the Guided Age to today. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.’s vision for Newport in 1913 left a lasting legacy on the city and its open spaces, including the creation of parks like Miantonomi. Newport’s urban forest also reflects the foresight of earlier residents. Centennial Beeches, planted during the Gilded Age, have contributed to the lush, green character of many parts of the city. Looking forward, how can we create a culture of stewardship to help shape the next century of Newport’s trees and open spaces? How can Newport’s green spaces look ahead to the future as a living legacy that also reflects their rich past?

Resiliency: How can Newport’s parks be prepared for future changes in climate, sea level rise, and storm surge? Today, King Park is already feeling the effects of higher sea levels. There is a need to adapt parks to be more resilient to Newport’s changing climate; traditional lawns on waterfront parks will need to shift to include more salt-tolerant plants. The City has begun the process of adding these types of plants to King Park. As water

levels continue to rise, flood risks to many parts of Newport will increase, particularly along the Downtown Harbor and in the North End. Parks, open spaces, trees, and other green infrastructure features present opportunities to absorb and filter stormwater, mitigating flooding and improving water quality. How can parks contribute to a more resilient city?

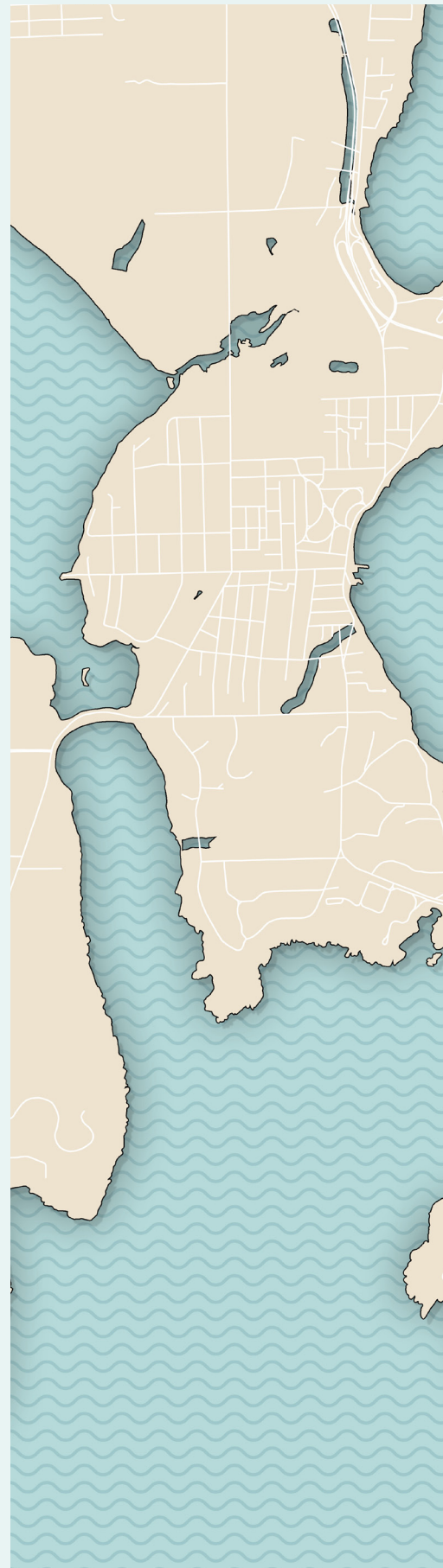
An Enduring System: Newport’s trees, open spaces, and waterfronts are defining features of the city; yet, they also face challenges from tight budgets and development pressure. Many of Newport’s beloved open spaces are not permanently protected, and older trees in the city, like its Centennial Beeches, are nearing the end of their lifespans. Open space preservation and a strategy for the next generation of Newport’s urban forest are critical considerations for the master plan. Newport’s public open spaces – including city-managed sites and two state parks – also face fiscal challenges. Maintenance needs are high and will increase for the Newport Buildings, Grounds, and Forestry division as schools are added to their responsibility. Parks staff are increasingly asked to do more with fewer resources. What are the opportunities to create a fiscally sustainable system to provide more support for maintenance?

Habitat and Natural Systems: Planning for trees, parks, and open space in Newport must consider natural systems, promoting functional ecological habitat and green connections. How can Newport’s green spaces and trees support the ecological needs of the City, as well as the recreational needs of residents and visitors?

Defining “Open Space”

This master plan process is focused on the diverse public open spaces and trees in Newport. This includes city parks, state parks, conservation land, trees, beaches, squares & civic spaces, the Harbor Walk, Cliff Walk, driftways, boulevards, sidewalks, cemeteries, and privately managed public open spaces (like Rovensky Park and the Great Friends Meeting House lawn). The multiplicity of open spaces are one of the defining characteristics of Newport: a city known for its scenic views and “green” and “blue” spaces.

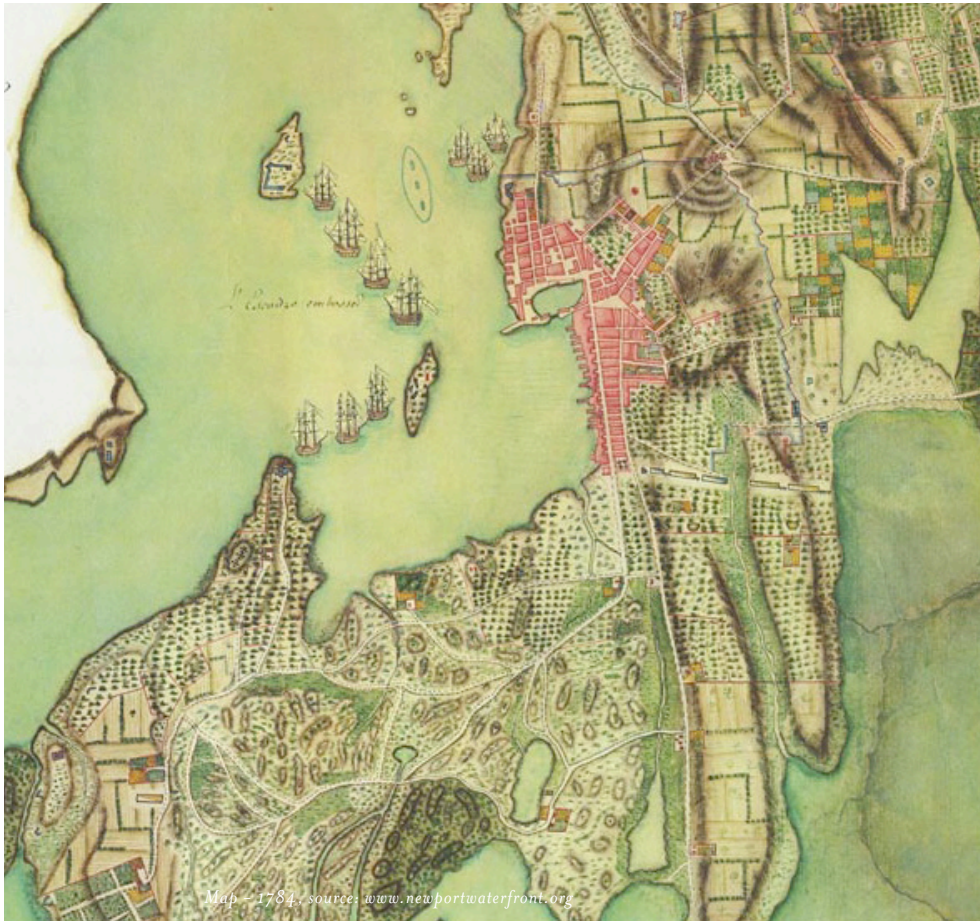
Newport’s open spaces play many important roles in the city, providing recreational, social, cultural, aesthetic, economic, environmental, resiliency, and community benefits. This plan will seek ways to balance issues of historic preservation, community needs, economic development, wildlife habitat, and ever-changing environmental conditions, including sea level rise.





Historic Legacy

Historic Legacy



Map: Settling Period 1639-1790

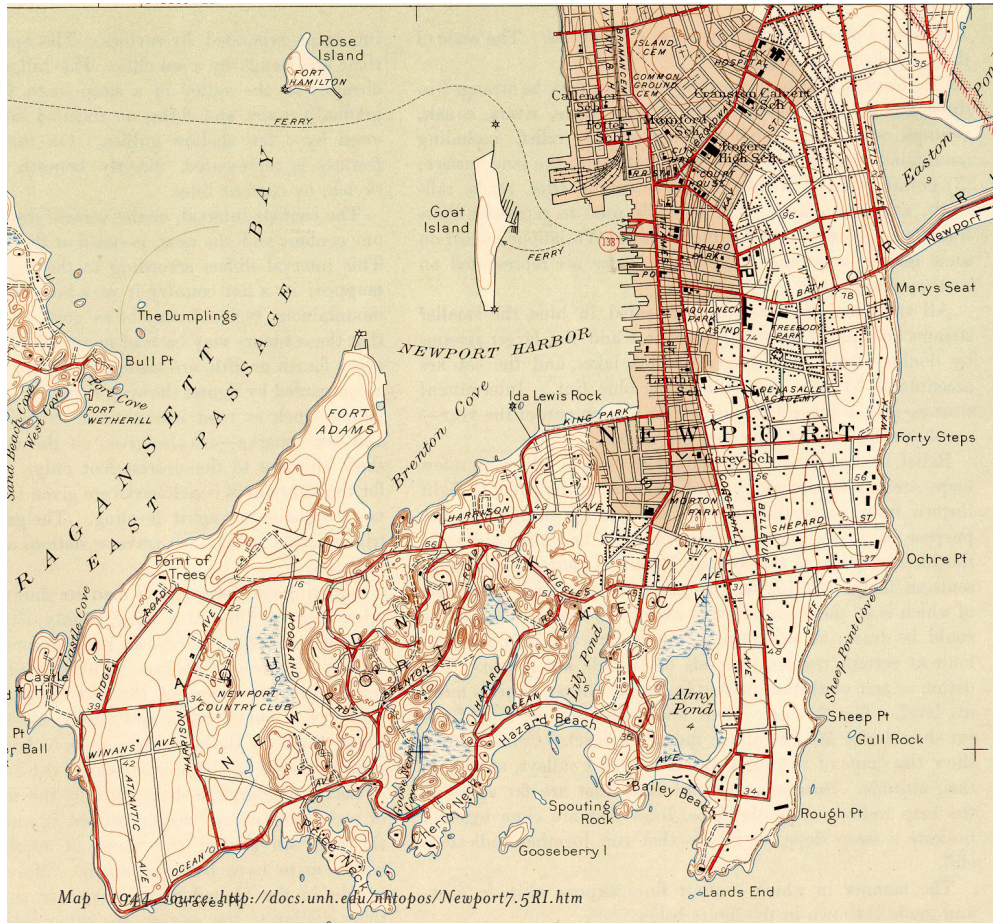
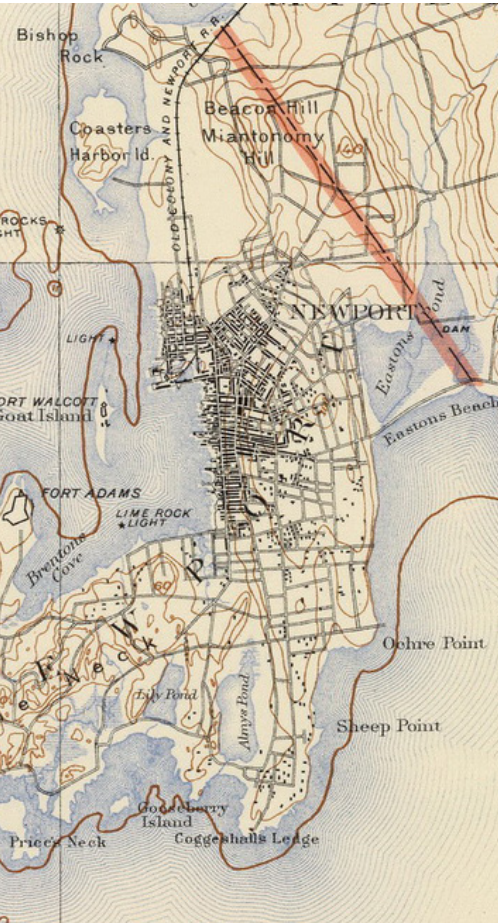
Settling Period: 1639-1790's: The City of Newport grew from its bustling harbor. A key port city, Newport rivaled Boston and New York in its early years. Dense development emerged around the harbor, and beyond the city edges, agriculture was a primary land use. In the heart of the city, open space was limited to smaller, civic spaces. Washington Square was the Town Common in this era.

Gilded Age: 1800s - 1930s: Following the Revolutionary War, Newport's Harbor declined in importance, stemming the growth of the downtown area. During this age, the City's outskirts became desirable locations for summer homes. The Cliff Walk, Bellevue Ave, and Ocean Drive reflect this



era of Newport's history. Many of Newport's larger open spaces were added during this time-frame, including Miantonomi Park, Morton Park, Cardines Field, Touro Park, and Aquidneck Park. Many of these parks focused on passive recreation and included naturalistic settings - rolling lawns and forested areas. The influence of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. on the city's development, open space creation, and character of open space was a defining factor of this era. More information about his 1913 plan "Proposed Improvements to Newport" is below.

Modern Era: 1930s - Today: Following the Gilded Age, Newport has undergone several significant economic shifts. The Navy



has played an important role in Newport's development, peaking in the 1940s. Following WWII, the Navy presence has declined in size. Today, the Navy is still the largest employer in Newport in personnel numbers and payroll (City of Newport), but the City's harbor and working waterfront have been transitioning to more tourism-oriented uses. over the past decades.

Open space created since the 1930s has been quite diverse. Recreational use of open space grew in popularity, influencing the development of parks like Freebody, Braga, and the Rogers soccer, track, and tennis facility. Fort Adams and Brenton Point State Parks, created in 1965 and 1976, respectively,

remain the largest preserved open spaces in Newport. Over the past several decades, the importance of waterfront open spaces has continued to increase, resulting in the creation of the Harbor Walk and parks like Mary Ferrazzoli. Today, Newport residents, workers, and tourists benefit from the rich diversity of outdoor spaces created over its history.

Map: Gilded Age 1800's- 1930's

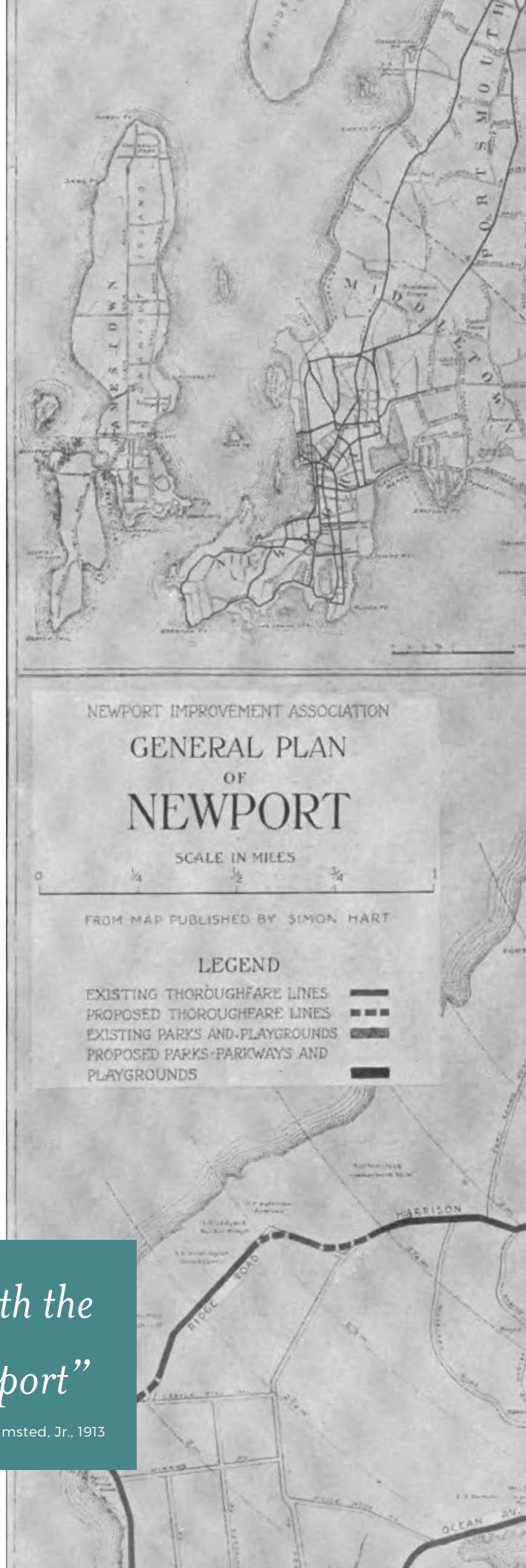
Olmsted's Vision & Legacy

OLMSTED'S PLAN + INFLUENCE

In 1913, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. developed a plan for the future of Newport's open space network entitled "Proposed Improvements to Newport." Olmsted's plan helped to shape the future of the city, recommending a framework for the establishment and preservation of open spaces and boulevards and greenways to connect them. His plan included several large new parks that were realized and remain vital to Newport today, including Almy's Pond and Miantonomi Hill. He recognized a need for more active recreation in the city, proposing a number of new neighborhood playgrounds. He did not view these parks and playgrounds as discrete entities; rather, he planned for parkways and boulevards to create a connected system. The plan included the selective widening of key streets and standardizing of setbacks to establish well-scaled vehicular and pedestrian connections. Olmsted emphasized the importance of distant views and water access to the identity of Newport and its parks - an identity that still holds true today.

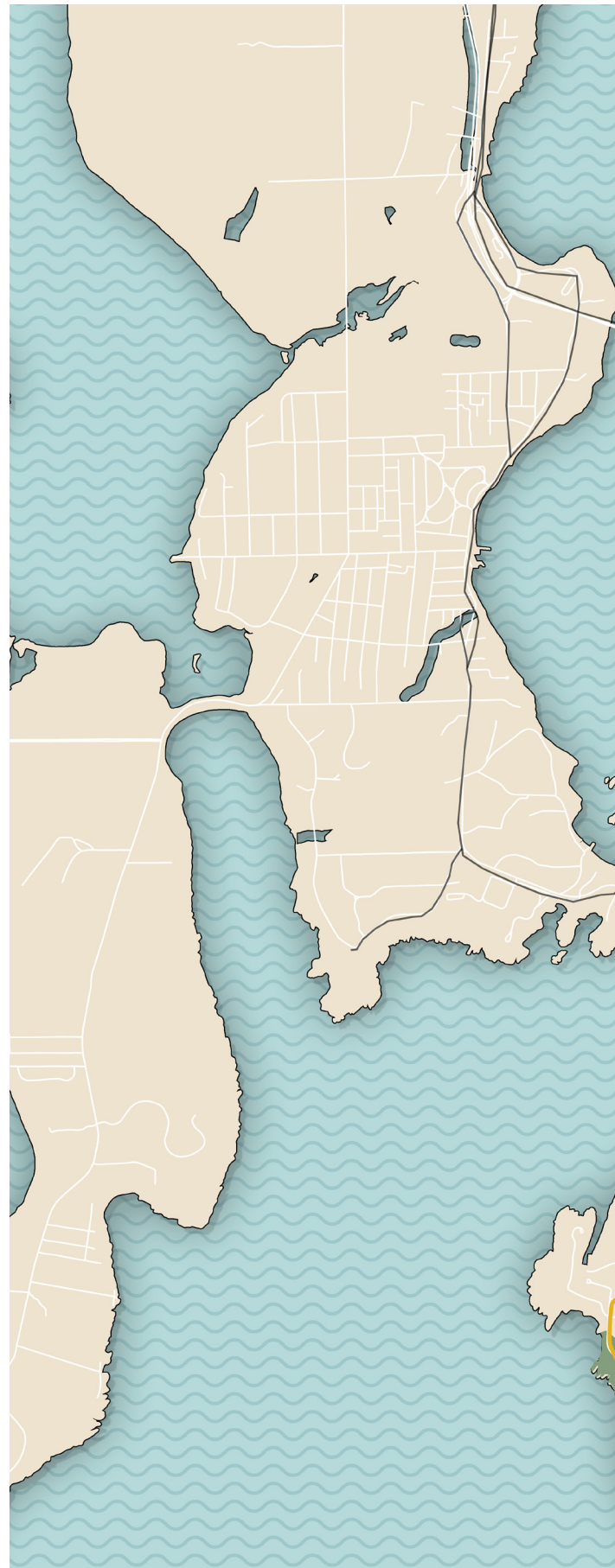
"I was impressed anew with the picturesque charm of Newport"

-Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., 1913





Olmsted's plan helped shape the future of the city, recommending a framework for the establishment and preservation of open space and boulevards and greenways to connect them.





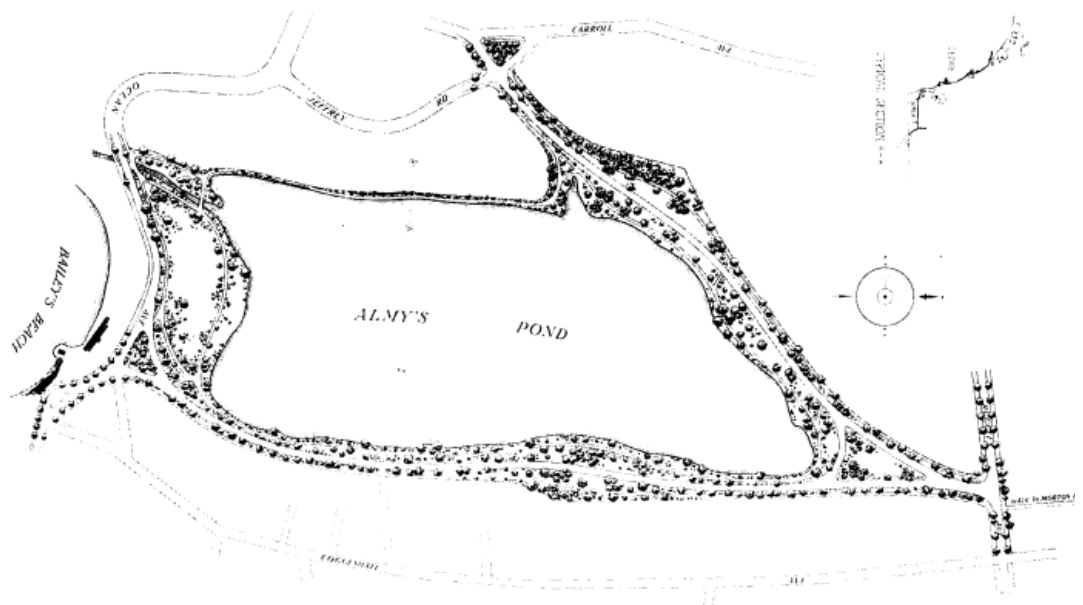
Historic Open Spaces & Trees

MAJOR HISTORIC PARKS, TREES, & OPEN SPACES

Almy Pond: Almy Pond was originally a salt water or brackish pond, but it later turned fresh water as the ecologies of the area evolved. Almy Pond was used for winter ice cutting until 1888 when concerns arose surrounding sanitation and proximity to sewer drains. Although Olmsted recommended the pond as a park in his 1913 Plan, the city did not follow through on his recommendation at the time. Residential development (and accompanying ecological damage) around the pond continued. From 1900 to 1970 development patterns led to the filling of freshwater wetlands and began to impact the pond's ecosystem. A 1980's residential development effort by Hugo Key and Sons met opposition from community and environmental groups. In 1996 the land and subdivision were in US Bankruptcy Court. In 2000, the land was officially converted into preservation land. Currently summer's increased population and increased lawn fertilizers create algae blooms on Almy and Lily ponds. This preserved 19.66 acres along the pond's northern border has the potential to improve the ecological health of the pond.

Aquidneck Park: The Edward King Residence and surrounding grounds (7 acres) were built between 1845 and 1847. The house was designed by Richard Upjohn, an English Architect best known for churches. The design of the grounds corresponded to trends in landscape architecture at the time made popular by Alexander Jackson Davis. In the style of the time, residences were integrated with the surrounding landscape for recreation and enjoyment. The Olmsted Brothers were consulted to help create a maintenance plan and recommendations for the estate's landscape in 1906. In 1913, the house was conveyed to the Trustees of the People's Library in Newport and the garage and the stable building to the Civic League of Newport. The remaining acreage was given to the City of Newport for creation of a public park. In the 1960's, the present Library building for the City of Newport was constructed at the south end of the property.

*Sketch for Almy's Pond.
Olmsted's 1913 "Proposed
Improvements for Newport."*



Cemeteries: When the earliest settlers in Rhode Island died, their graves were marked with wooden markers or plain fieldstones. After a few decades of economic and social development gravestone carvers began to work in New England, and slowly examples of their work appeared in burial grounds. Local slate was used as the primary material through most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. After the Revolutionary War, marble slowly became the most fashionable stone and became the predominant material until granite took over in the late nineteenth century. Rhode Island, founded on principles of religious freedom, has a high density of cemeteries compared to neighboring states. Each town harbored several different denominations; parishioners who died were buried in an accompanying parish graveyard, or, if the congregation was too small for a central cemetery, they were buried in small family burial plots on the edge of the home. This pattern shifted around 1850 when towns began to construct public and private garden cemeteries modeled after Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, MA. In the 1660s, Newport opened the Common Burying Ground as its central cemetery.

In 1990, a project began to transcribe Rhode Island's colonial gravestones to create a flexible historical database with photos and searchable transcriptions. The database today has 435,000 recorded inscriptions from 3,143 cemeteries across the state. Today, restoration of historic headstones is an ongoing need for the city.

Cliff Walk: Exact origins of the Cliff Walk are somewhat obscure. It is believed to have been a path originally traversed by fishermen and townspeople seeking respite as well as early tourists to Newport. Public access to the waterfront runs deep in Rhode Island's history. Tradition dictates that the path originated around 1640 under the Colonial Charter of King Charles II, which gave men the right to hunt whales and other fish along "any part of the coast and there kill them without molestation." In 1842 the Rhode Island State Constitution affirmed that "the people shall continue to enjoy and freely exercise all the rights of fishery and the privileges of the shore." By 1925, the dirt trail had become a continuous gravel walkway connecting Easton's Beach and Bailey's Beach running along the cliffs past the magnificent mansions of the nation's wealthiest industrialists. The gardeners at the mansions helped to contribute to maintaining the path. Various conflicts have arisen throughout the Cliff Walk's history between landholders hoping to protect their properties from passersby and townspeople seeking to maintain public access to the walk. Maintenance is another issue that threatens the Cliff Walk; natural erosion and hurricane events have damaged or even washed away trail sections. In 1975 the Cliff Walk was designated as a National Recreation Trail (the first in New England) and the federal government has invested in helping to stabilize the Cliff Walk.



*Historic cemeteries in
Newport*

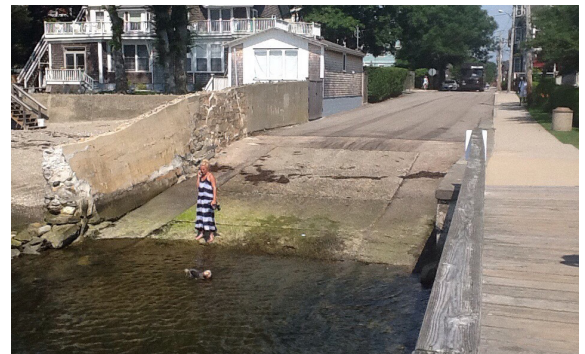
Driftways: Newport, Rhode Island's driftways were created as a way to maintain public views and access to the waterfront even as the waterfront was developing with commercial port activity and private residences. They originally functioned as public boat launches for small private vessels that could be hand launched and serve that same purpose today. They also are believed to serve a flood protection function, allowing storm surge to flow between houses, protecting coastal homes during storms. Today, historic driftway crosswalk materials of slate and cobble have been compromised.

Fort Adams State Park: From Newport's earliest history, protecting the harbor has been of utmost concern. Fort Adams' earliest fortification of any kind was a Watch Tower in 1739 as precaution surrounding the war between Spain and Britain. In 1776, at the outset of the American Revolution, the citizens of Newport voted to construct a Fort at Old Brenton's Point and were ordered to help with construction of the fort or pay a fine for each day of labor missed. Earthwork was completed by the end of 1776 and the fort armed. However, the fortifications proved insufficient and Newport was occupied by the British. The British undertook the strengthening of the fortifications throughout the area (redoubt on Conanicut Island and landward fortifications in the form of trenches and barbed wire fences). Their

fortifications were strong enough to protect against the 1778 American and French attempt to recapture Newport. In 1779, the British voluntarily evacuated Newport.

In 1799, the structures designed by French officer Major Louis Tousard were officially christened Fort Adams for President John Adams. While the fort was unscathed in the War of 1812, President Monroe advocated for stronger coastal defense systems and Fort Adams underwent what is commonly called the Third System of fortifications (designed by French Engineer Simon Bernard and American Engineer Joseph Totten). The original fort was demolished in 1824 and a period of construction, with the help of many Irish Masons, began on a new Fort Adams, and continued through 1857. Totten used construction of the fort as training for young engineer officers and conducted experiments to determine strength and resistance of different materials and construction techniques.

In the mid-1880s, the Endicott Board gave recommendations for highest priority investments to re-fortify coastal defense systems. Fort Adams was relatively low on the list and additional investments in the fort structure were not funded or implemented. Fort Adams was deeded to the State of Rhode Island in 1965.



Miantonomi Park: Thirty acre Miantonomi Memorial Park, the largest city-owned park, was part of Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s 1913 recommendations. The park's rich history begins with early colonial settlers, who used the hill for a lookout, for public executions, and for beacons. In 1881 the site was purchased by Anson Phelps Stokes and remained in the family until 1921 when Mrs. Stokes sold it to the city so that the historic area could become a memorial to Newport men who died in "The Great War." In deeding the property to the city, she stipulated that the premises should be for the free use of the public forever. This commission developed the site and dedicated it as a war memorial on Armistice Day in 1923. In 1925, the Commission initiated a fund drive to raise \$75,000 to build the tower, and, in 1929, the World War I Memorial Tower was erected and dedicated on the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Rhode Island. The tower was designed by architects McKim, Mead & White.

In 1977, the city obtained Community Development funds to improve the park to benefit the city and immediate neighborhood. The 1990 Renovation Master Plan for the park generated additional improvements. The most recent planning effort occurred in the 2005 Miantonomi Management Plan. A major goal of the Commission throughout its history has been to involve Newport residents in assisting the Department of Recreation and Public Services with the maintenance and improvements of the park. The 30-plus acres of park woodland have been consistently improved by volunteer effort.



Poplar Street Driftway, 1937

Image provided by the
Point Association

Morton Park: This historic park was donated to the city by Levi Morton, a future Vice President of the United States, who drove one of the first rivets into the Statue of Liberty's big toe as the Ambassador to France. Frederick Law Olmsted redesigned the park in the mid-1890s, integrating paths, restrooms, and a bandstand in a naturalized landscape setting. Today, the element of Olmsted's design that remains is the layout of trees.

Queen Anne Square: Queen Anne Square has a fairly recent history compared to some of Newport's other historic public spaces. The 1973 fire at the Walsh Brother's Furniture Store, a key Thames Street retail anchor, was a catalyst for redevelopment of the dense and slightly blighted area. The fire opened the opportunity to restore the historic Trinity Church to prominence—it had been almost entirely obscured from view by low quality development. The Newport Redevelopment Agency created a plan to redevelop the commercial area of Thames Street between Mill and Church Streets. The plan called for the addition of period residential buildings, parking and possibly a small park. At the urging of Trinity Church with support from other quarters, Doris Duke and the Newport Restoration Foundation (NRF)

became interested in the concept of a park surrounded by 18th-century buildings. In the end, the Redevelopment Agency negotiated titles to all the property in the area bounded by Mill, Thames, and Church Streets up to the existing church property. Trinity Church also built a new multi-purpose building, the Carr Rice House, designed to blend with the period buildings in the area. The original project was completed in 1978. In 2013, an installation called The Meeting Room opened at Queen Anne's Square, accompanied by various other landscape improvements and updates. The project was designed by artist Maya Lin in collaboration with landscape designer Edwina von Gal and Nick Benson of the John Stevens Shop.¹

Washington Square: Washington Square, with Eisenhower Park as its heart, is the historic, economic, social, and civic center of Newport. The green space at the center, known today as Eisenhower Park, functioned as Newport's first town common. The green space was originally used as a temporary holding area for livestock such as sheep and cattle brought into town for purposes of trade, and then was the site of several small dwellings and a shop. The area was serviced by a spring at the top located behind the Colony House. It forms the entry courtyard for the Court House building and acts as a major pedestrian thoroughfare to destinations on either side of the park.

Washington Square was the Town Common.



<http://www.newporthistory.org/about/brief-history-of-newport/>

¹ The John Stevens shop, founded in 1705, is a historic stone carving shop in Newport. It is responsible for significant inscriptions around the country, including the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC, the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, AL, and the Boston Public Library. In Newport, the work of the John Stevens and his sons is visible in many of the gravestones at the Common Burial Ground.

NEWPORT'S TREE LEGACY

Tree Heritage: Trees have always been an important part of Newport's history. Olmsted commented on trees as one of Newport's best assets in his 1913 plan, noting the tremendous variety of species and robust quantity.

Tree importing and planting began in the Colonial era with the collection by Abraham Redwood. Robert Melville, British Governor of Granada, described the flourishing colonial-era arboriculture of Aquidneck Island, in a letter circa 1764:

The roads of the Island are bordered with a variety of ornamental trees; nearly every farm has its orchard of engrafted trees of every description, suited to the climate. The whole Island is of an excellent soil, and under the highest state of cultivation. In the vicinity of the Town are several fine gardens...their greenhouses and hot houses producing the fruits and plants of every clime.

(The Rhode Island Historical Magazine, Vol. 6, No. 1, July 1885)

With many trees supplied by Arnold Arboretum, the Gilded Age estate properties and their lavish gardens continued to help propagate an arboreal culture in Newport and the preservation society that maintains the estates today helps protect the trees as well. An estimated 357 different tree species were documented at one point in the 19th century.²

Today, with trees lost to development and old age/frailty, the tree canopy in Newport is estimated to be only half of its historic extent. After World War I, Newport's collective passion for collecting new tree species began to fade. The Hurricane of 1938 stripped the island of many of its most spectacular

trees. Centennial Beeches are some of the most noble and noticeable heritage trees that remain in Newport. Nearly 400 remain, scattered throughout various estate properties, including purple beeches at Aquidneck Park and the fern leaf Beech planted outside the Redwood Library. In 1991, an ordinance was passed to preserve Newport's tree heritage through replanting efforts and public-awareness. In 2011, the Newport Arboretum was established, New England's first citywide arboretum, with living collections including both public and private trees.

Liberty Tree in Ellery Park: In 1765, the buttonwood tree at the intersection of Thames and Farewell streets became a gathering place for the Sons of Liberty to protest the oppressive Stamp Act and was branded the Liberty Tree. Patriots hung effigies from the tree and led protest rallies at its base. The tree continued to be an icon for the independence movement throughout the Revolutionary War. When Newport was occupied by the British in late 1776, the tree was cut down by British General Thomas Gage. When the war ended, an oak tree was planted at the site in 1783. A third Liberty Tree was planted to replace that oak in 1876, but only survived 21 years. The fourth and current Liberty Tree at Ellery Park, a fern leaf beech tree, was planted in 1897.



*the Liberty Tree
in Ellery Park*

2 Simpson, Peter. Newport's Living Legends.

Historic Elements

MAJOR HISTORIC ELEMENTS AT OTHER PARKS

Old Stone Mill-Touro Park: The origins of the stone structure in Touro Park (referred to as the Newport Tower, the Old Stone Mill, or the Touro Tower) are unknown. One possibility is that the structure may have been constructed in the mid 17th century as part of the estate of Benedict Arnold, the first colonial governor of Rhode Island. It was used for various purposes throughout its history, as a wind mill, a haymow, and for powder storage in the mid 18th century. During the American Revolution, it was used as a lookout by American troops and, while Newport was occupied, the British stored munitions in the tower.

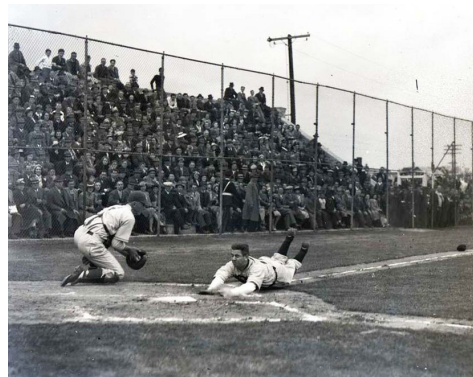
Cardines Field: Originally called Basin Field, with references found as early as 1893, the property was used by local railroads as a drainage and supply basin for steam engines. Neighbors complained about the smell and mosquitoes, which prompted drainage of the area. Local groups of railroad and other workers began to play baseball on the field. There is some debate over whether baseball was played here prior to 1900, which would make it one of the oldest ball parks in the United States. Earliest documented proof of the stadium construction is the

backstop which dates to 1908. The field hosted many barnstorming all-star teams and Negro League Teams. In 1936 the City of Newport took ownership of the stadium and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) constructed stone bleachers along the third-base line in 1937. The original WPA grandstand was destroyed in the hurricane of 1938 and reconstructed in 1939.

The park was eventually renamed for Bernardo Cardines, a Newport baseball player who was the first Newport citizen to die in World War I. During World War II, many professional baseball players were stationed at the Naval Station in Newport and played in an amateur league called the Sunset League which continues to this day. The Newport Culls, a summer collegiate baseball team, moved to Newport in 2001 and have helped raise attendance and activity at the field.

Freebody Park's WPA-era stadium: Land for Freebody Park was donated to the city of Newport in the 1870's and was designated for use as a baseball field in 1882. A stadium and walls were constructed by the WPA after World War I. Freebody Park was home to the Newport Jazz Festival from 1955 until 1964.

*Cardines Field (right)
and Touro Park (left)*



[http://newport.toursphere.com/en/
cardines-field-7027.html](http://newport.toursphere.com/en/cardines-field-7027.html)



*WPA-era
slide*

WPA-era Improvements: From its creation in 1933, the Public Works Administration (PWA) and after 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) commissioned various infrastructure and public works projects throughout the City of Newport. These projects included the Brenton Point Sea Wall (1935-1939), Cardines Field Stadium, and Waterworks Improvements (1938-1939). The Brenton Sea Wall is a 10' concrete wall roughly a mile in length that helps protect the southern part of the city from flooding and storm events.

Various parks around Newport also feature WPA-era stone and concrete slides, such as the structure at Murphy Field. Freebody Park also reflects the influence of the WPA.

Community Needs

Community Needs

OVERVIEW OF OPEN SPACE ANALYSIS PROCESS

How much open space does Newport need from a community perspective? This question is the basis of an analysis process which analyzed Newport's parks and their uses in three ways:

- **Quantity (count of acreage):** Is the amount of park-space appropriate?
- **Location & Distribution:** Is park space distributed well across the city? Do all areas have access to the parks and recreational amenities they need?
- **Quality and maintenance:** How well are parks and their amenities maintained?

This analysis was based upon information from several different sources:

- **Park & Amenity Inventory:** The consultant team completed an inventory of all 82 of Newport's public open spaces, visiting each space and documenting its characteristics and amenities.
- **National Standards:** The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) maintains a database of park system data in the US. Our team used information from this database to understand national trends and standards in parks and recreation elements.
- **Newport's demographic trends:** The team used data from the US Census and American Community Survey to understand population characteristics and trends.
- **Focus group feedback:** Information from stakeholders and Advisory Group discussions has helped verify gaps and identify additional needs.

Information from the first public meeting and online survey have also informed these results.





Role of Open Space from a Community

perspective: Open space provides many benefits from a community, economic, and tourism perspective. Parks offer recreational opportunities, promoting active lifestyles and healthy living. They are places to gather and socialize with friends and family, or to enjoy quiet time alone appreciating natural scenery. With programming, festivals, and Farmers' Markets, parks and open spaces can provide access to cultural and other activities. Parks play important roles in neighborhood identity and help share the story of the City's history. They contribute to increased properties values in adjacent areas and can act as catalysts for economic development. Parks can also preserve scenic views, beloved landscapes, and public access points to the waterfront.

Role of Trees from a Community Perspective:

The urban forest provides a valuable asset to the community. Social, economic, and environmental benefits are derived. The goals for the future are to protect, manage, fund and engage the urban forest in everyday life.

Economic Benefits: Urban trees and forests have been shown to increase property values by 4-15%. Similarly, studies have shown that tree lined retail streets are a factor in consumer spending. Trees invite people to slow down, window shop and spend up to 12% more on goods and services.

Environmental, Aesthetic, and Comfort Benefits: Trees are a crucial part in the urban ecosystem for people as well as wildlife. They provide an aesthetic quality to humans, and are also home to local and migrating animals, a storm buffer for rising seas and major coastal storms and energy benefits. For example: the average young, healthy tree is equivalent to ten room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day (actrees.org).

Community Needs

PARK DEMAND

The first part of the open space analysis examines the “demand” for park space. How much open space is needed by Newport, based on its population size, characteristics, and distribution across the city?

Newport parks and open spaces are used by a wide range of people – residents, workers, tourists, seasonal residents, and students. The year-round population of Newport is about 24,700, but it swells up to 100,000 on peak summer weekends (summer population is approximately 65,000 on average).

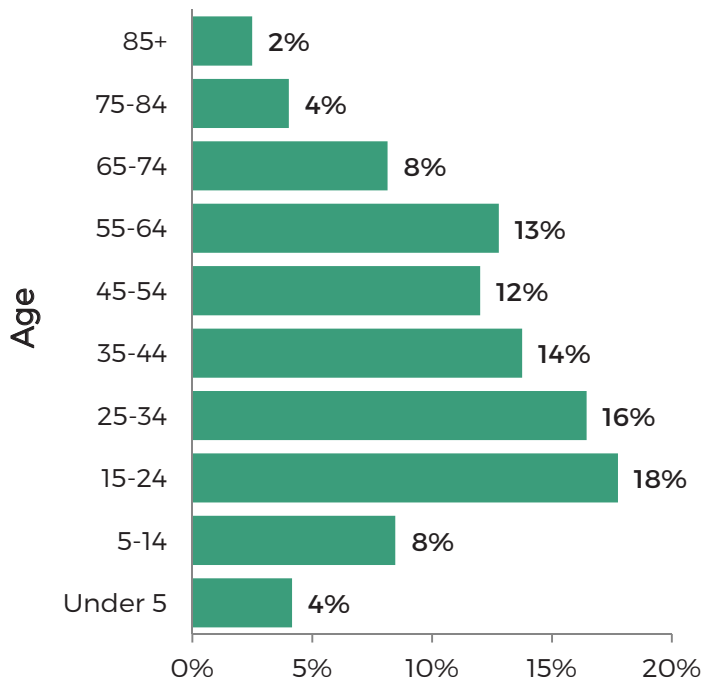
Year-round resident park demand: The year-round population has been steady, with a slight decrease from 2000 to 2010 (-7%). Newport’s population is economically and demographically diverse. Income varies significantly, with 16% of households earning less than \$20,000 annually and 17% earning more than \$125,000. Overall, 11% of households live in poverty. This is higher than other communities on Aquidneck Island (Middletown’s household poverty rate is 9% and Portsmouth is 8%), but lower than the average across the state (14%).

Newport residents are also diverse in terms of age. Newport’s median age is 37 years old, younger than Middletown (42), Portsmouth (46), and the state as a whole (40). Nearly a quarter of Newport’s residents are between 15 and 34 years old, giving the city a higher percentage of young adults. Overall, 21%

of households have one or more children living at home. Eight percent of Newport’s population is 5-14 years old, and 4% is under 5 years. At the same time, 14% of residents are over 65 years, and this number is projected to increase in the future. Open space planning and programming must balance the diverse needs of residents of all ages.

These different ages are also distributed unequally throughout the city. More children and youth live in the North End compared to other parts of the city, while a higher percentage of older residents live in central and southern parts of Newport. This can be translated to a higher relative need for playgrounds and athletic opportunities in northern parts of Newport, and a higher relative demand for passive open space in the central and south.

Other factors that relate to park demand are density and income. Lower income residents have a higher demand for nearby parks because they are less likely to have access to a car to access more distant parks. Density also prompts the need for open space; denser communities have a higher need for nearby parks than lower density areas. Based on these factors, park demand is higher in the North End and Downtown than in other parts of Newport.



A DIVERSE AGE DISTRIBUTION

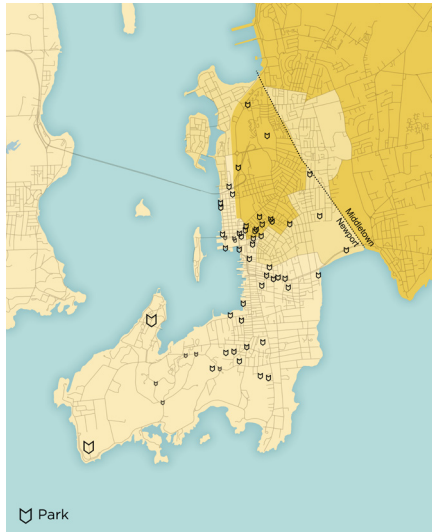
Percent of Newport's Population

- Demographics & tourism data sources:
- 2013 ACS, 5 year estimates; City of Newport; 2000 and 2010 Census
 - Discover Newport - number of vehicles crossing the Claiborne Pell Bridge
 - Newport's Comprehensive Land Use Plan - Economic Development Chapter
 - Discover Newport and travel guide sites like TripAdvisor, Lonely Planet, 10 Best, etc.

Park Needs Across Newport

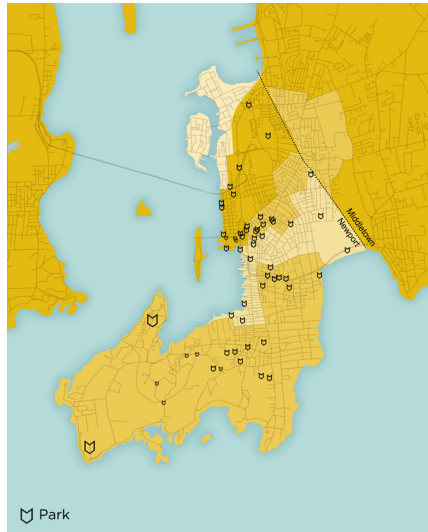
Age Distribution

Under 5 years



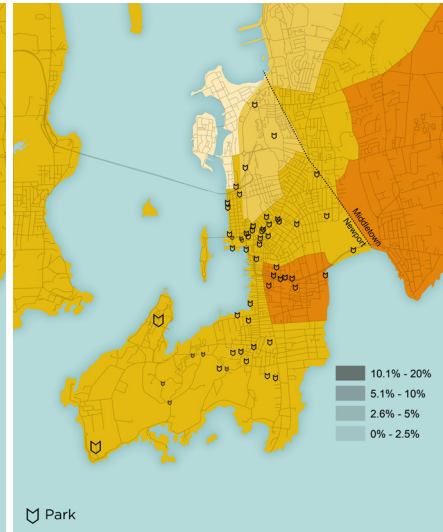
North End: Greatest playground demand

5 to 14 years old

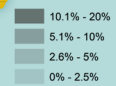


North End: higher active sport & older child playground demand

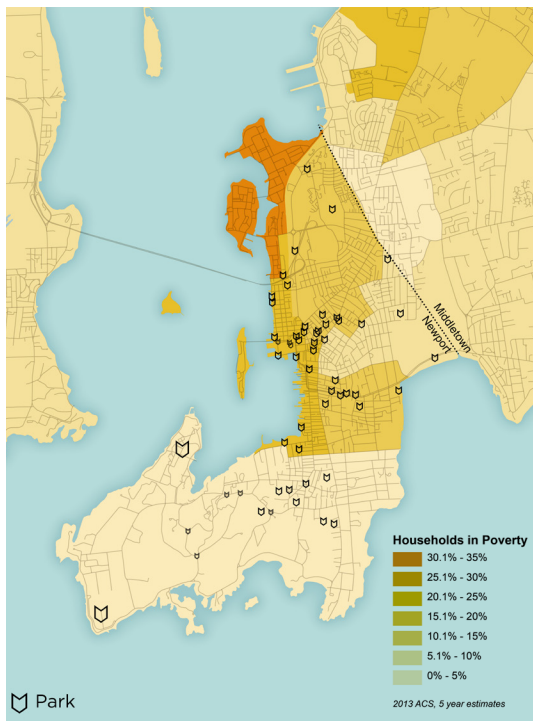
65 years and older



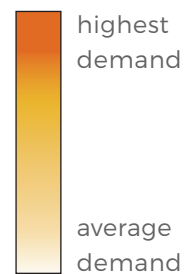
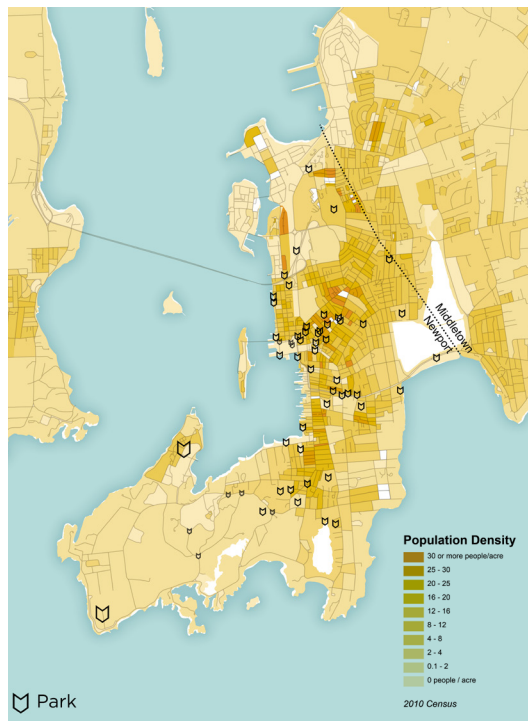
South and Central: higher passive rec. demand



Poverty



Density



Data source: 2013 American Community Survey (5 year estimates) and 2010 U.S. Census



Seasonal resident and tourist park demand: In the summer, Newport's population swells with tourists and seasonal residents. Eleven percent of Newport's housing is seasonal/occasional use (American Community Survey). Tourists come from across the country and around the world to visit Newport. The majority of domestic visitors come from New England or the Mid-Atlantic. International visitors frequently come from Europe (57%), Canada (19%), and Asia / Middle East (12%). These visitors and seasonal residents increase demand for open space, especially in the summer. In fact, several open space destinations are some of the City's top draws for tourists, including the Cliff Walk, Fort Adams State Park, Easton's Beach, and Brenton Point State Park.

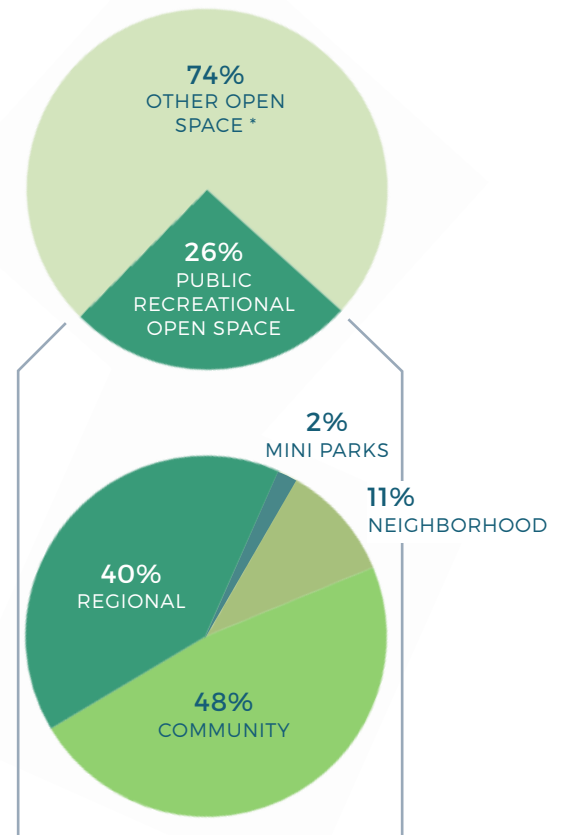


Park Supply

The second part of the open space analysis is to examine the “supply” of park space. How does the supply of open space and amenities compare with demand?

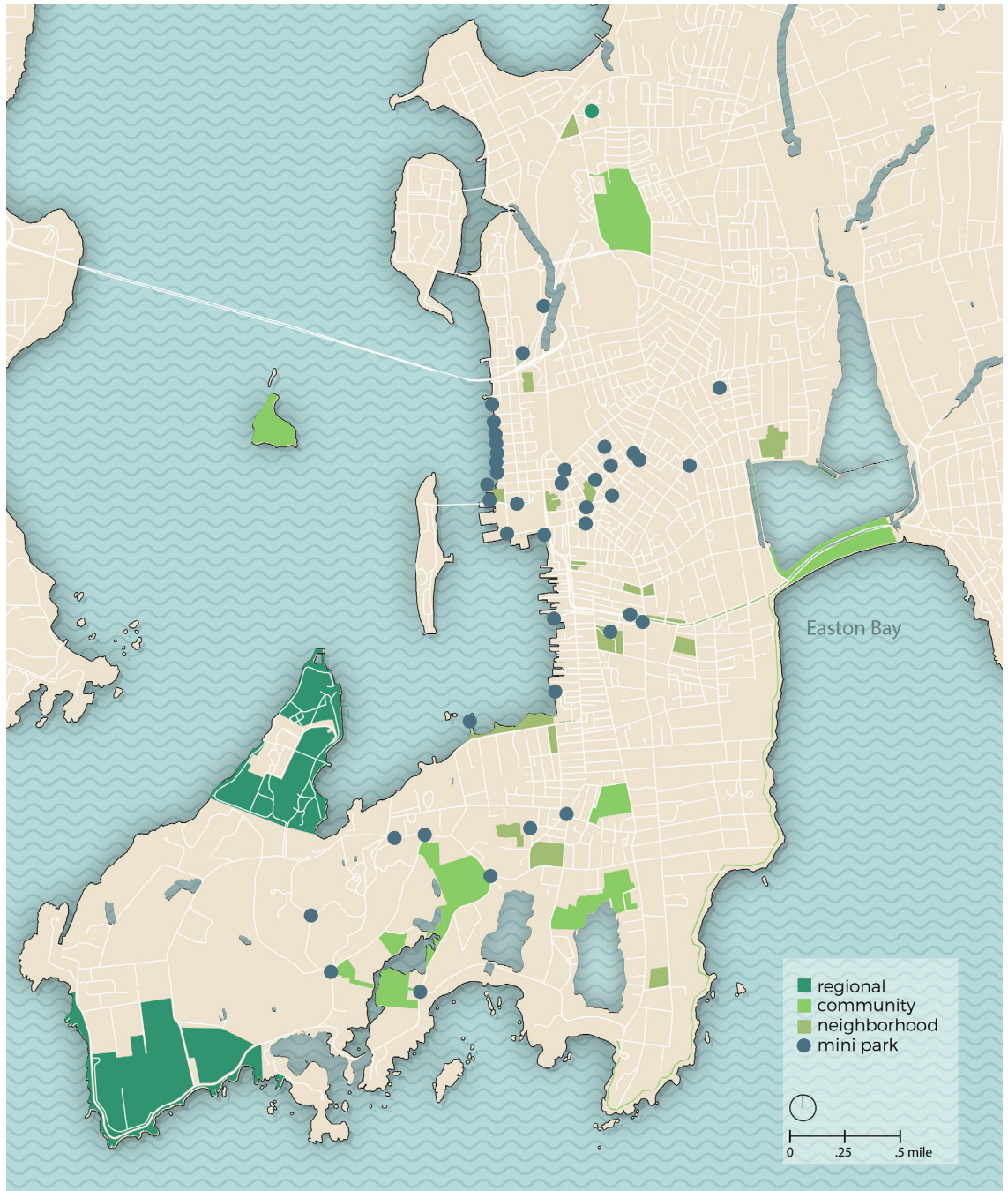
All recreational open space: This analysis focuses on recreational open space, which includes public parks as well as privately-owned open spaces that are open to the public (like Rovensky Park or the Newport Art Museum grounds). Newport has about 2,370 acres of open space, of which 613 acres are parks or public recreation. This translates to 25 acres per thousand residents, well above the national standard of 10 acres per thousand residents recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA).

* Other open space includes non-recreational focused open space like cemeteries or open space that is not public, like private golf courses, country clubs, or university open space.



Open Space Acreage composition (top graph) & Public Recreation Open Space Acreage composition (lower graph)

METHODOLOGY DETAILS: Recommended” acreage is based on national standards and customized for Newport. Park need is assumed to be 1 acre per thousand residents for mini parks and 4 acres per thousand residents for neighborhood, community, and regional parks. The recommended year-round acreage is based upon 24,700 residents, while the summer average is based upon 65,000 park users and a peak demand of 100,000. These calculations show how year-round demand compares with summer average and peak demand for open space. Recommended amenity numbers are based upon data from comparable sized cities available in a national database of park systems (NRPA’s PRORAGIS database). This analysis uses data from forty park systems in cities with populations of fifteen thousand to fifty thousand. For each amenity, the average number of amenities per park system of similar size nationally was used as a benchmark for Newport. For example, cities of Newport’s size have an average of 15.6 playgrounds/total lots (median = 12, maximum = 52 in Farmington, NM, minimum = 4 in Rochester, NH). Summer demand for recreational elements only (not park space overall) is based upon the additional influx of users and assumes a quarter of these visitors and seasonal residents make full use of recreational amenities like playgrounds or baseball fields. For playgrounds, this translates into demand for an additional 3.9 playgrounds in the summer on average, and an additional 8 at peak times.



- All open space in Newport = 2,372 acres
- Parks / Public recreation in Newport = 613 acres
- **25 acres** per thousand residents
- NRPA recommends **10 acres** per thousand residents

Park Types

OVERVIEW OF PARK TYPES

Parks can be divided into categories based on their size and general function. Typically, smaller parks address localized needs (like a small playground or waterfront access point), while larger parks draw users from farther away for destination activities (like Fort Adams State Park). The uses offered at a park vary by category. Neighborhoods parks are considered the most critical for local, walkable park access and community health; these types of parks provide a range of playground amenities and recreational opportunities for residents. Community parks are larger in size and often feature a greater concentration of sports fields and other recreation amenities to meet demand for a broader area. Regional parks include the broadest range of amenities and must accommodate a wide range of programming and users. These parks often play an important economic role in the park system, helping generate revenue which can help fund the rest of the system.

MINI-PARK



- < 1 acre
- Address limited, unique, or isolated recreation needs
- Can complement neighborhood parks in dense, urban areas
- Includes many waterfront parks and driftways

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK



- 1-10 acres
- Focal point of a neighborhood with family activities
- Walkable for residents

COMMUNITY PARK



- 10-50 acres
- Meet broad community recreation needs
- Preserve unique landscapes
- Contribute to a connected system

New Kinds of Open Space for Newport?: Overall, Newport has quite a variety of open spaces, including some like Driftways that are unique to the city. Opportunities for new kinds of open space include community gardens and water play areas / splash parks. On the other hand, many parts of Newport have direct water access, so splash parks may not be needed. In addition, the opportunity to increase green infrastructure for stormwater management in the city was also frequently discussed by stakeholders. Green infrastructure helps absorb rainfall as it runs across streets or parking lots, cleaning it and helping improve water quality.

REGIONAL PARK



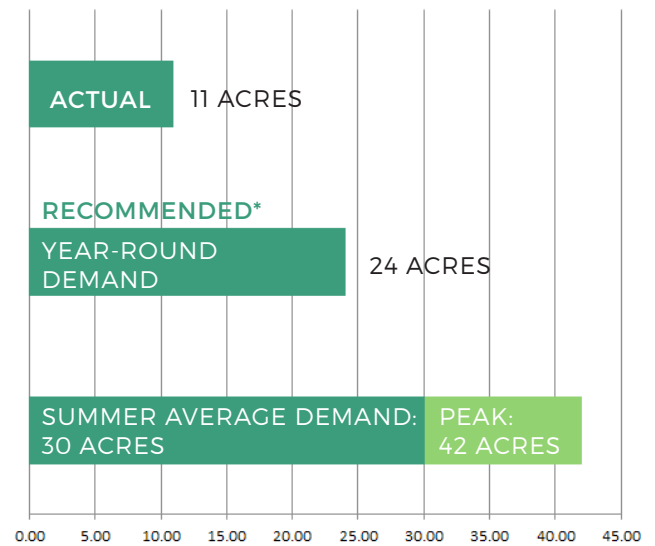
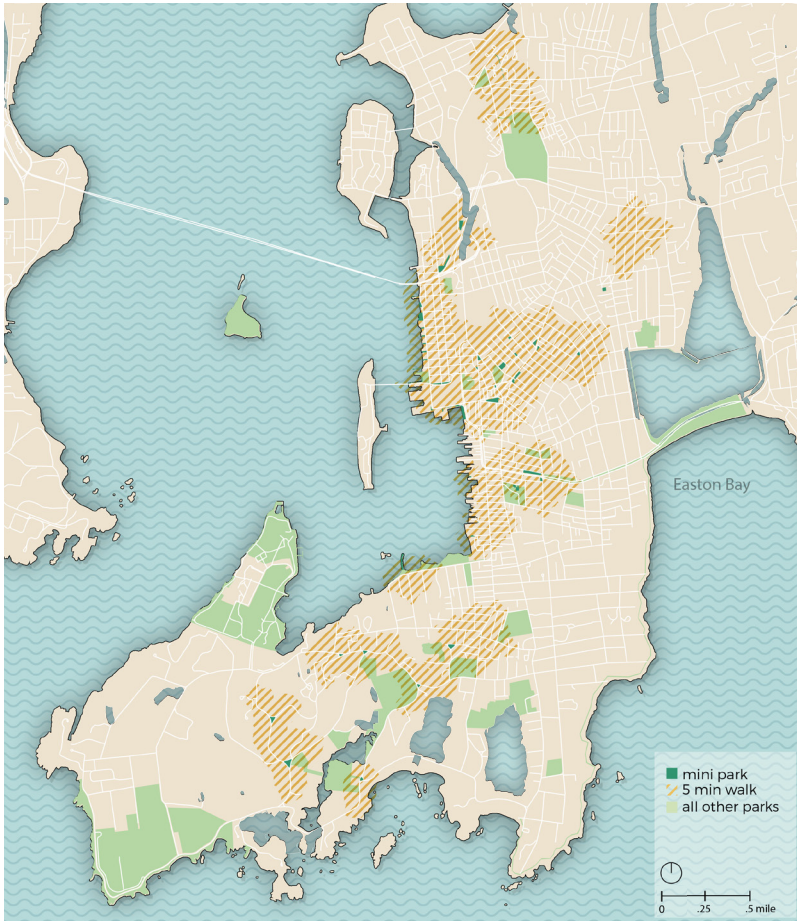
- 50+ acres
- Serve broad spectrum of regional recreation needs
- Require partnerships and substantial funding
- Destination activities

SPECIAL USE PARK



- Size varies
- Parks that serve a specific function (ex. dog parks)

MINI PARKS



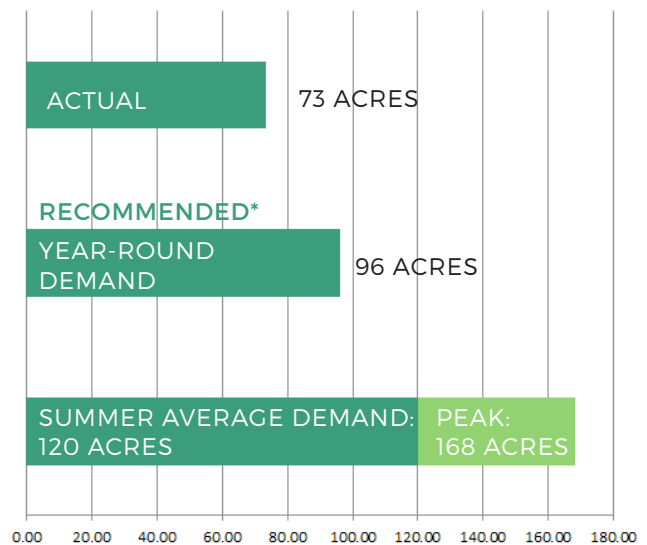
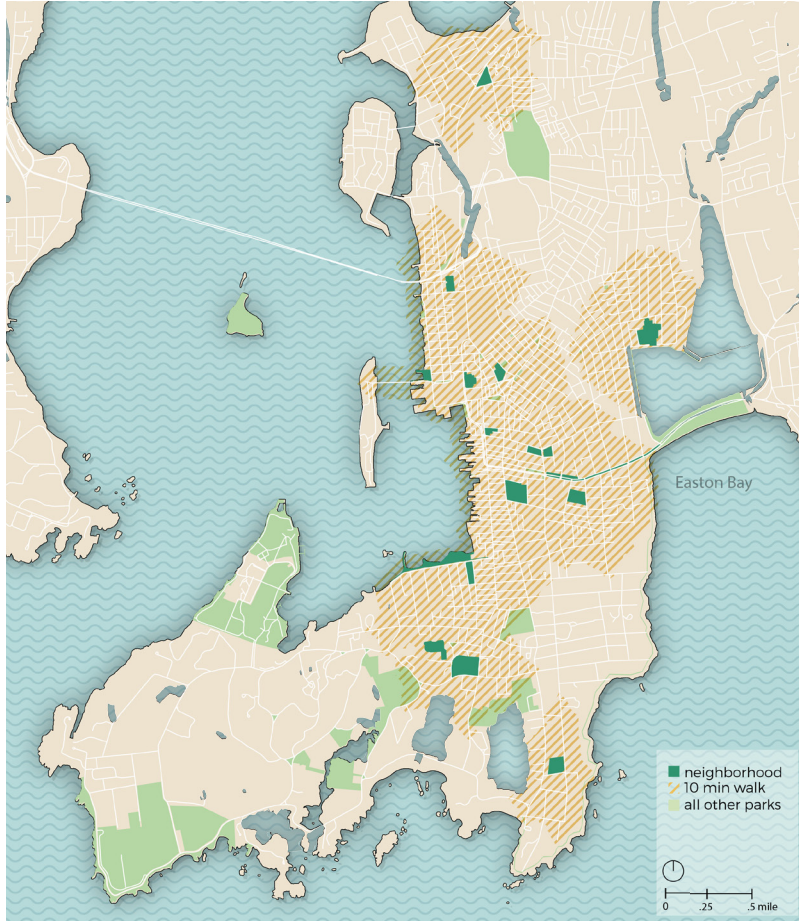
* Recommendations are based on national standards, customized for Newport based on city characteristics, population, and demographics

Newport has 45 mini parks and open spaces of less than one acre in size for a total of 11 acres. This park category includes many open spaces in Downtown, along waterfronts, and in the central part of the city. This category also includes traffic islands, which are maintained by the Newport's Buildings, Grounds, and Forestry division.

These small-scale parks can help fill gaps in park coverage, but they also add disproportionately to maintenance burdens, requiring more effort to maintain because of their small size and distribution across the city. National benchmarks suggest that a city of Newport's size is under-served by mini-parks (both year-round and in the summer), but these needs can also be met with other sizes of open space if possible.

- Mini parks are concentrated in dense downtown areas and along waterfronts.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS



* Recommendations are based on national standards, customized for Newport based on city characteristics, population, and demographics

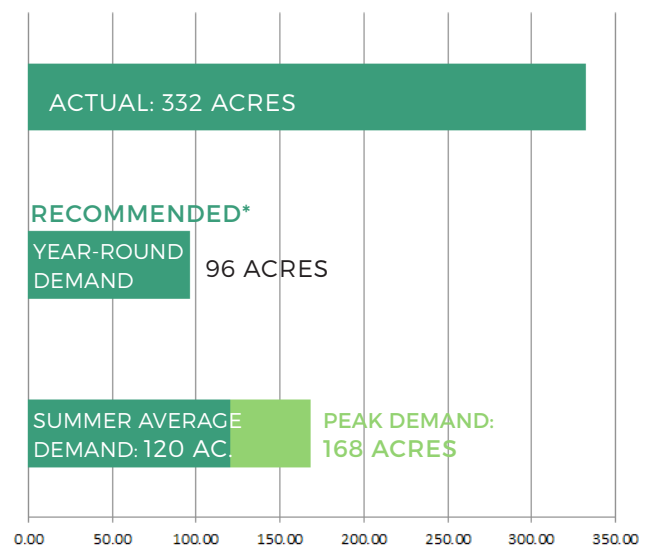
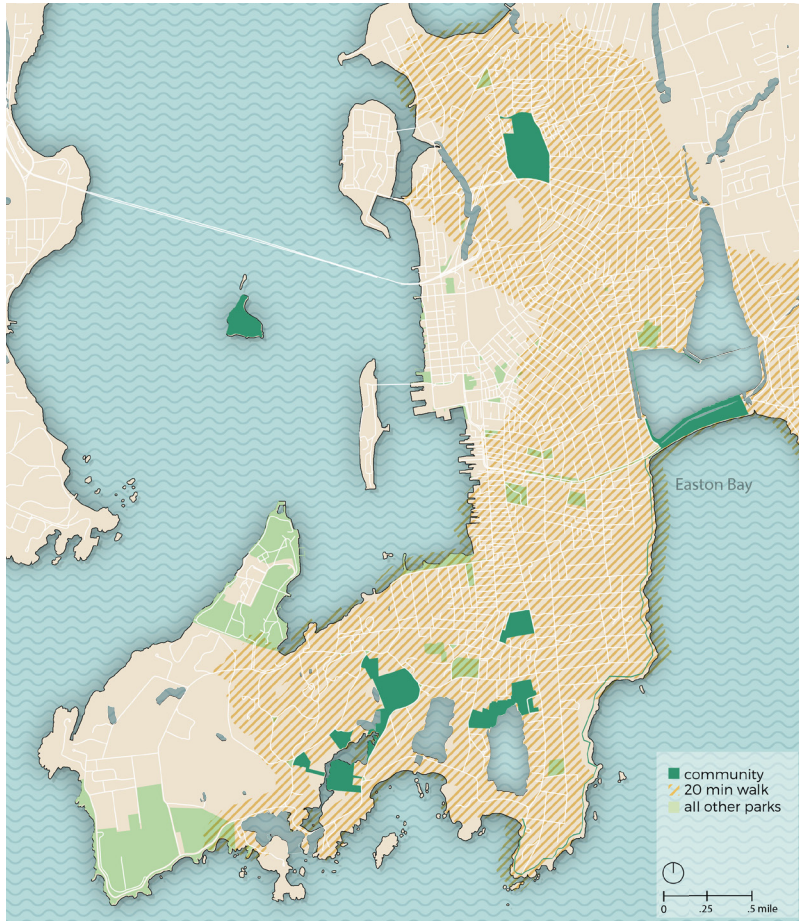
Ranging in size from 1 to 10 acres, neighborhood parks offer walkable park access and are key elements of a diverse open space network. Newport includes 17 neighborhood parks, a total of 73 acres. Overall, this quantity is close to the amount that national standards suggest is appropriate (96 acres), but lags summer demand more significantly.

Furthermore, the distribution of these parks is uneven across the city. The North End only has one main neighborhood park (Abruzzi Little League Field) with one more on the neighborhood periphery (Hunter Park).¹ In contrast, central Newport and Downtown have nine neighborhood parks.

¹ You might be wondering, "Why doesn't Miantonomi Park count towards the North End's neighborhood park total?" Miantonomi Park does help meet open space needs, but its size and function (combination of recreation and broader areas of habitat / natural areas) places it in the "Community Park" category. Even with Miantonomi' park' area, the North End is still severely short open space.

- The North End has insufficient neighborhood parks.
- A high concentration of neighborhood parks exists Downtown.

COMMUNITY PARKS



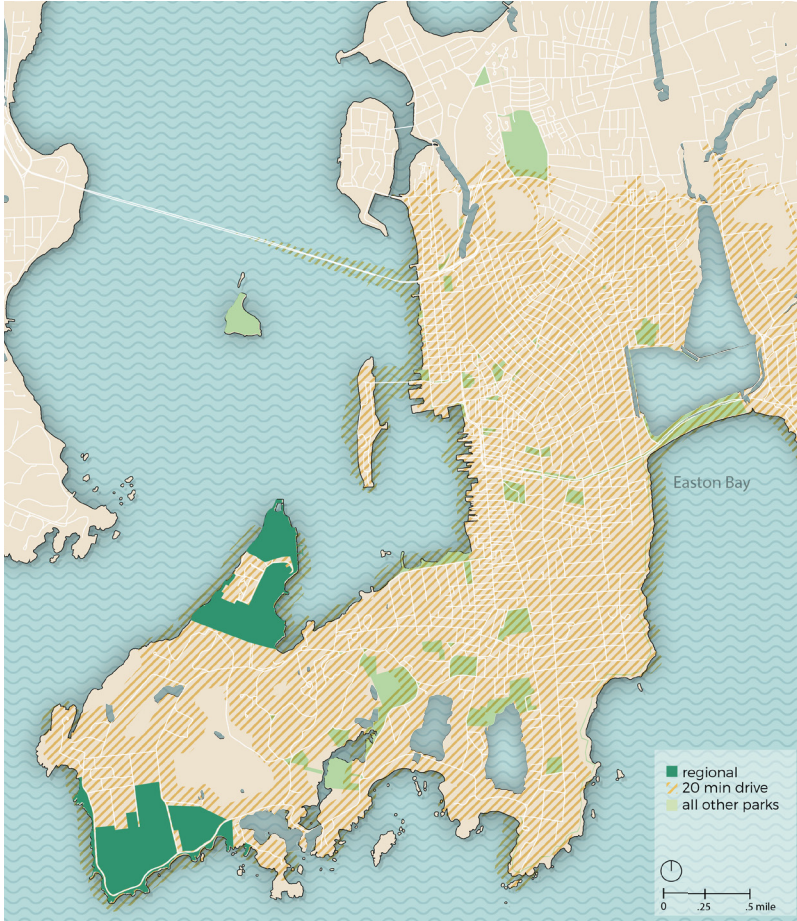
* Recommendations are based on national standards, customized for Newport based on city characteristics, population, and demographics

Newport includes 10 community parks. With a total of 332 acres, Newport is incredibly well-served by parks of this scale. These numbers far exceed the recommendations for community parks year-round and in the summer (nearly double peak summer demand!) These open spaces include a wide diversity of parks, ranging from natural parks like Gooseneck Cove and Ballard Park to parks like Morton with more recreational elements like playgrounds. Many of these parks, including Almy Pond and Miantonomi, reflect the foresight of Olmsted's 1913 plan.

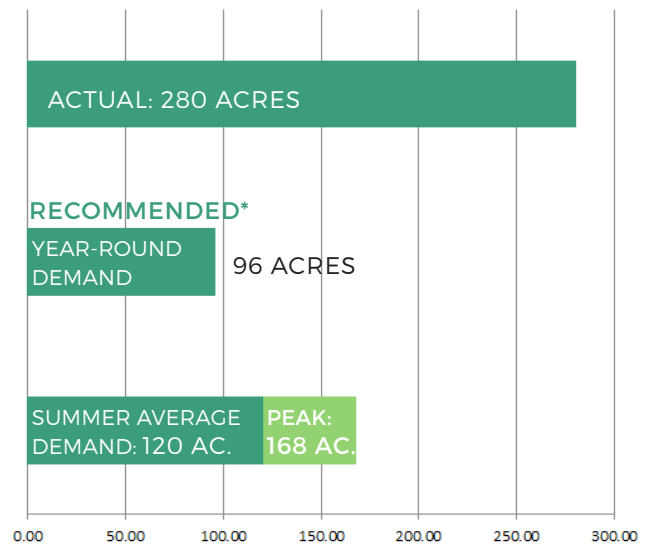
Community parks are well-distributed throughout the city, with a high concentration along the southern coast. Overall, community parks account for 48% of the city's overall recreational open space acreage.

- All parts of city are in proximity to community parks.
- An especially high concentration of community parks exists in southern Newport.

REGIONAL PARKS



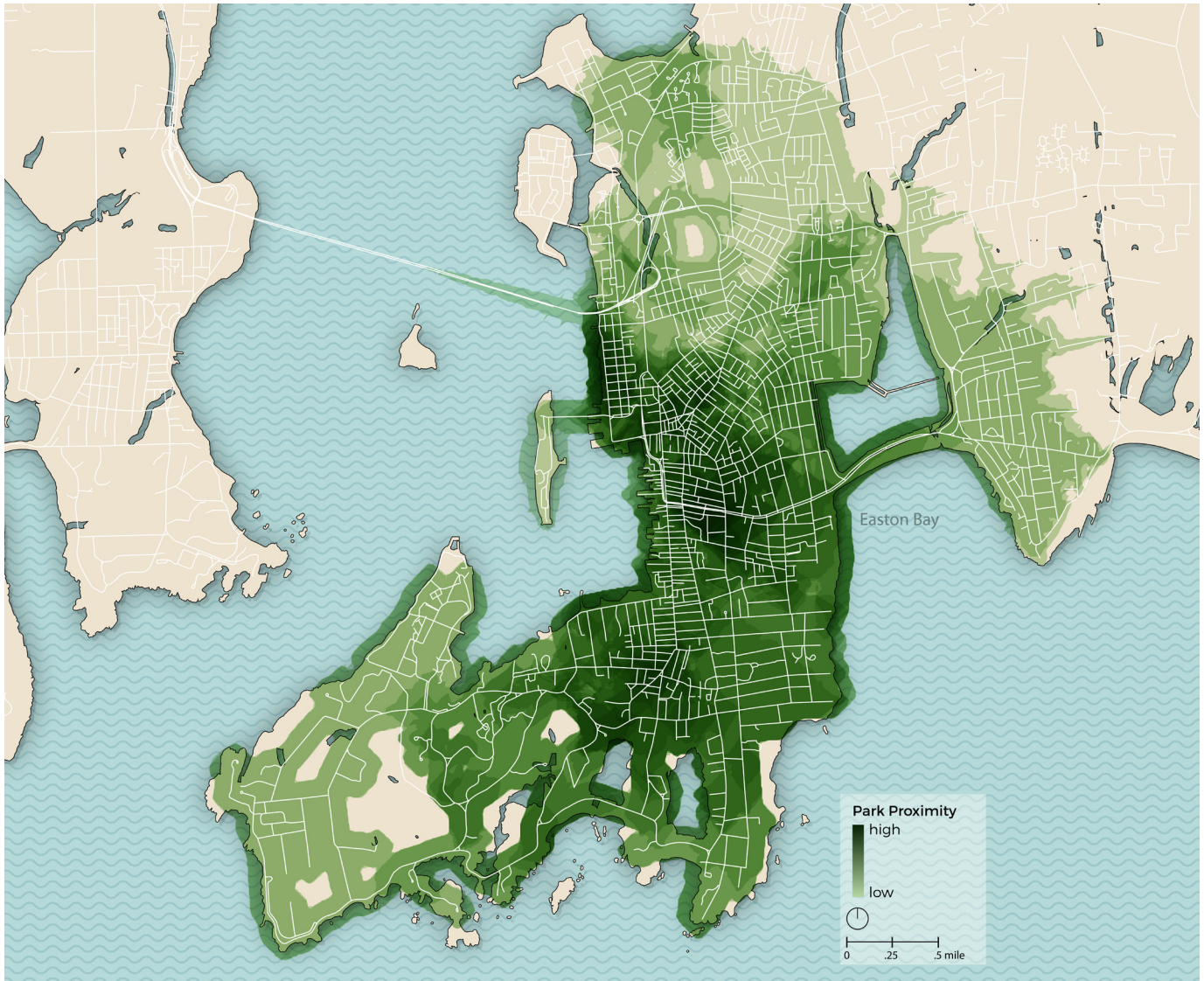
Newport has two regional parks of more than 50 acres. Brenton Point and Fort Adams state parks lie in the southwestern corner of Newport, but serve a broad population. Maintained by the Rhode Island Division of Parks and Recreation, these open spaces are used by tourists and residents alike and play important roles in water access and scenic views. Together, these parks total 280 acres, accounting for 40% of the overall recreational open space in the city. This number exceeds recommendations for regional parks by year-round residents and summer tourists and visitors in a city of Newport's size.



* Recommendations are based on national standards, customized for Newport based on city characteristics, population, and demographics

- o All regional open space is located in the southwest zone of the city.

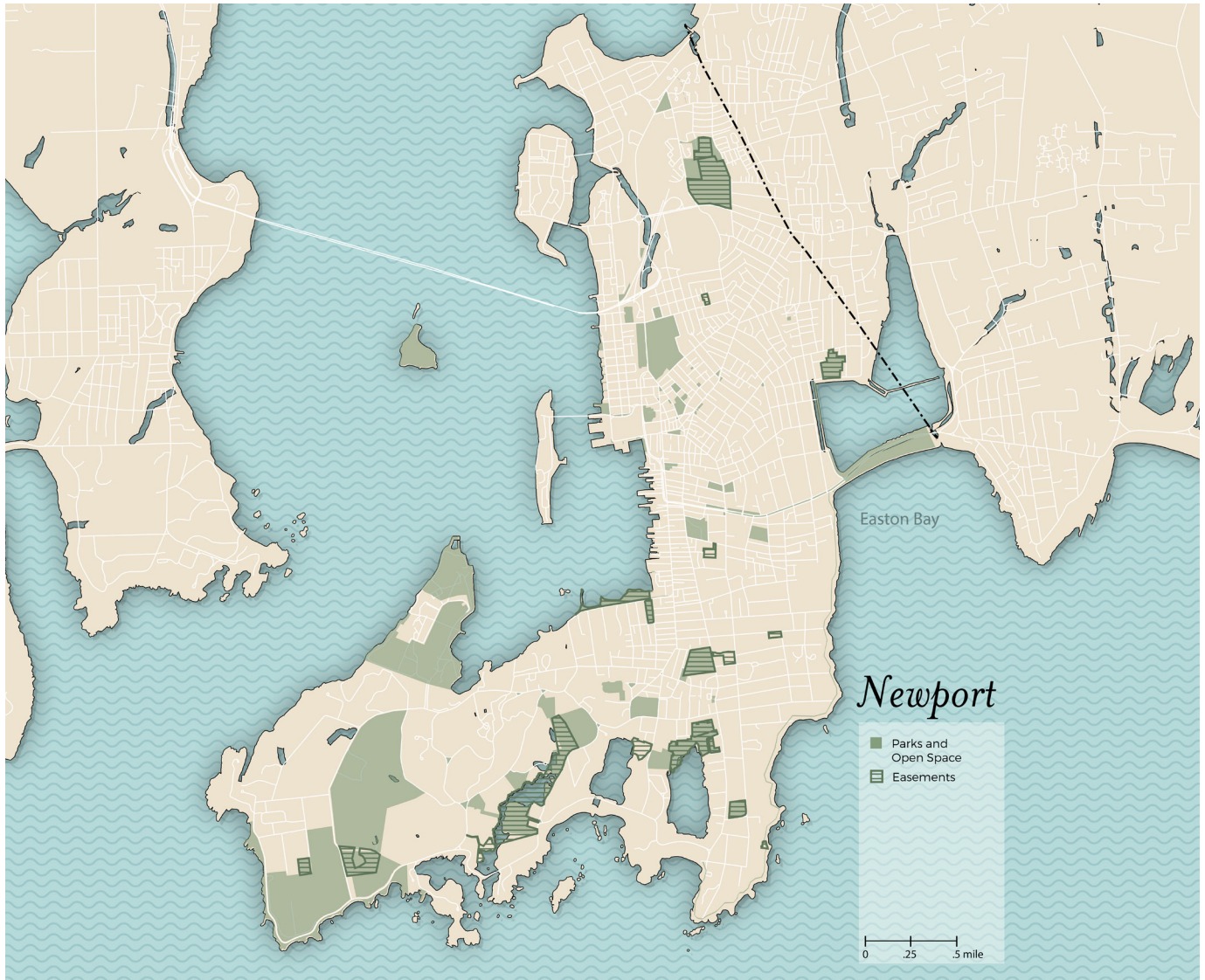
OVERALL PARK PROXIMITY



From a quantitative perspective, Newport's overall open space availability is quite high. The availability of this open space to residents, however, varies significantly throughout the city. This map shows the concentration of parks throughout the city; the darker the shade of green, the greater the proximity to one or more parks. Lighter shades of green indicate areas with less access to parks within walking distance.

The number of parks is highest in Downtown and central Newport. The southern part of the city is well-served by a number of community parks, natural areas, and Brenton Point and Fort Adams state parks. The North End has less access to parks, with only a few located within the neighborhood. Finding opportunities to address this gap is critical because the North End has very high park demand, based on its demographic and economic characteristics.

PERMANENTLY PROTECTED OPEN SPACE



Newporters enjoy an abundant amount of green space, but only some of its beloved parks and open spaces are legally protected as open space. ALT Easements currently cover only 180 acres of open space in Newport. Easements protect King Park, Spencer Park, Morton Park, Gooseneck Cove, Almy Pond, and Braga Park. Most parks do not have legal protection against development.

Miantonomi Park, for example, is only partially protected with easements; the remainder of the open space area is owned by the Newport Housing Authority.

Park Operations



Newport's parks and open spaces are well maintained.

Strengths: Newport's parks benefit from strong dedication from park staff and leadership. The Buildings, Grounds & Forestry Division has worked aggressively at leveraging grant dollars for park improvement, and the quality of maintenance in parks is very good. Staff are knowledgeable and hard-working, and institutional knowledge is high. Leadership has a good pulse on current trends and best practices in parks, open space, and recreation, and this knowledge greatly benefits local open spaces and trees. Improvements in the system including converting tennis to pickle ball, installing Musco LED lights at the tennis court, CXT bathrooms¹, and mechanical bulb planters reflect this knowledge. Institutional knowledge is very high, and parks and recreation staff have a good working relationship. Parks staff appreciate the role programming can play in elevating the system. In addition, many groups care about Newport's parks and have helped provide support over the years.

Challenges & Opportunities: Despite these positives, park, open space, and recreation face challenges in Newport. The staff are incredibly hard working, but budget constraints have resulted in a labor force undersized relative to park needs. This lack of labor resources is a huge challenge. Staff are increasingly asked to keep up more acreage with less funding. Detail maintenance is a particular problem given the small number of staff. The challenge will grow even greater as schools are added to the group's responsibility. Across the system, many amenities are underpriced; raising fees for select amenities (like gazebo rental at King's Park) could help with the budget challenges the department faces today.

With a large amount of institutional knowledge held by a few key individuals, system knowledge is at risk if these individuals leave. Staff have also expressed desires for more growth and development opportunities. Currently, the low numbers of staff and high maintenance duties leave little time for additional training opportunities. In addition, the department relies on manual approaches to scheduling, work orders, and maintenance management, which require more time and effort than automatic/standardized technology solutions.

Staff see many open spaces in need of additional activation with amenities. In addition, maintenance staff would like more opportunity to provide input into design processes; they find not enough attention is being given to ease of maintenance when installing park amenities. Early planning can help reduce the long-term maintenance burden.

Although the overall quality of maintenance is high, there are exceptions. The condition of the skate park at Easton's Beach and track at Rogers High School are poor. The skate park, as well as dog park, are in need of permanent homes. The skate park has faced challenges with upkeep, especially due to wind-blown sand and sea spray. A more inland location, away from blowing sand and salt spray, would not have these challenges, and it could also have the benefit of being closer to potential youth users. In addition, the system is challenged in several places by regular flooding and the effects of salt water. These difficulties are most prominent at King Park today, but other parks and open spaces will face similar challenges in the future as sea level rise continues.

¹ CXT is a manufacturer of precast buildings often used in parks and national forests.

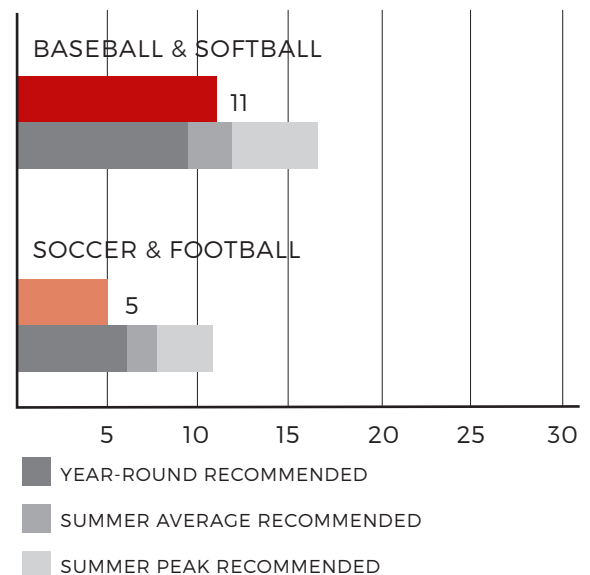
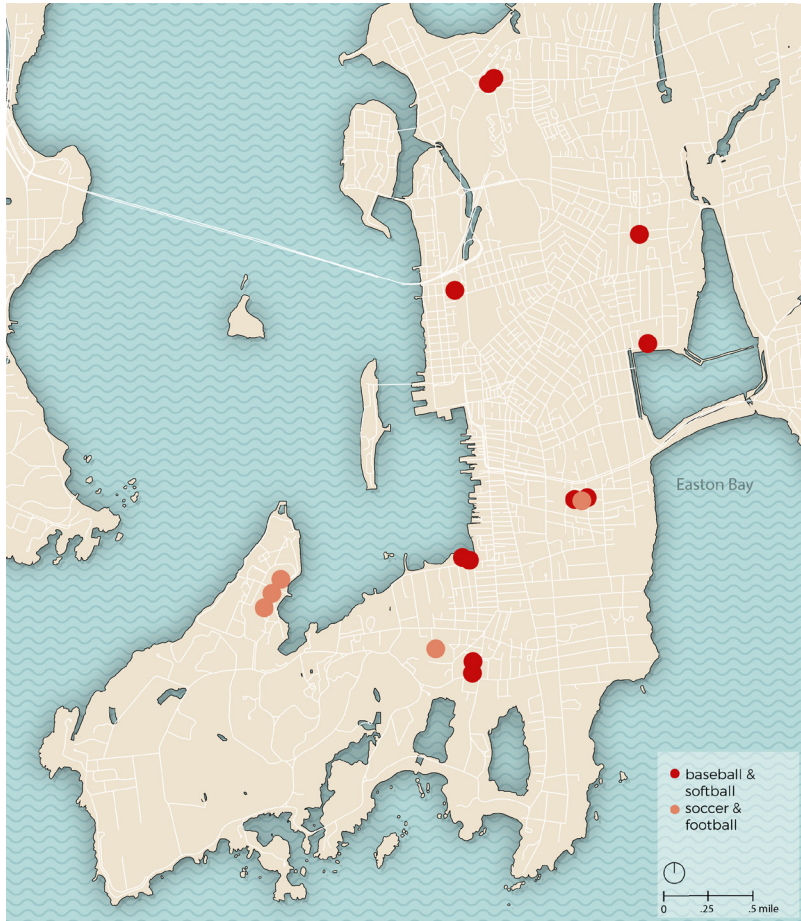


Maintenance considerations will continually need to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Finally, although many stakeholders and organizations help care for the parks, this assistance can be complicated by many different missions and focuses. Balancing neighborhood and local desires with city-wide needs can help create a system that works well for the broad range of constituents it serves.

Active Recreation

FIELDS

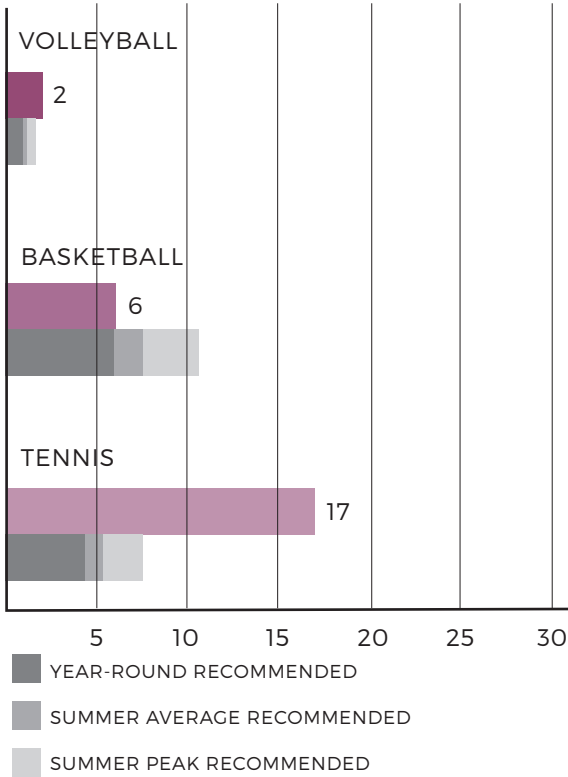
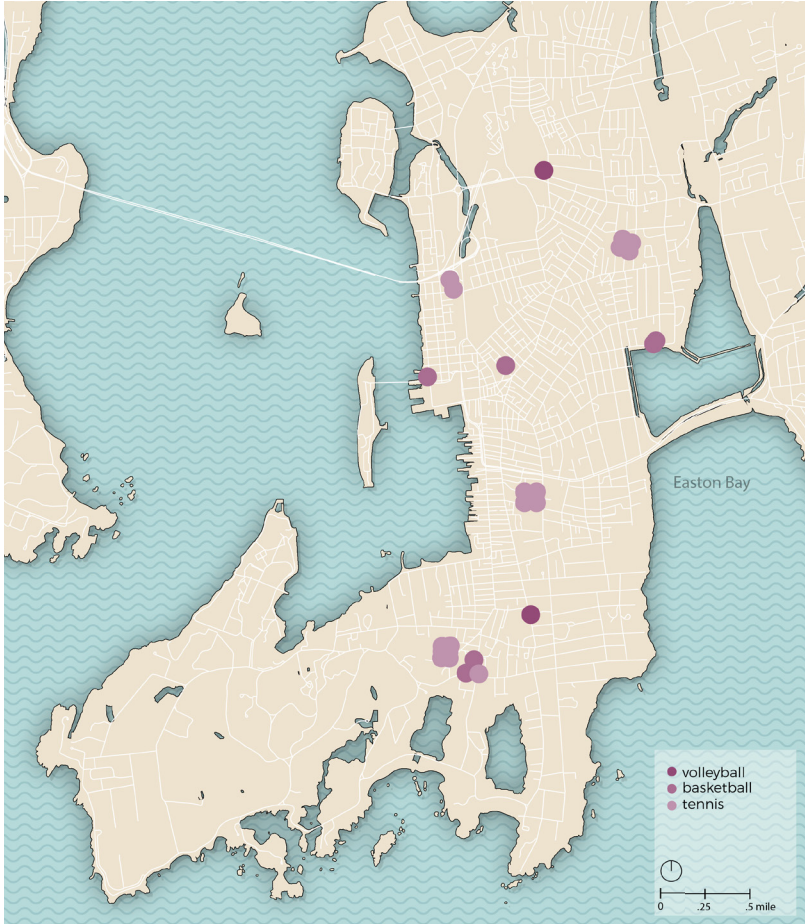


From a quantitative perspective, Newport has a sufficient number of fields to meet year-round demand. Baseball/softball fields are well distributed throughout the city in parks ranging from Abruzzi Little League Field, King Park, Braga Park, and Murphy Field.

Fields for soccer or football are limited to the southern half of Newport. The North End has none of these fields.

- No soccer or football fields exist in the North End currently.
- Baseball/softball fields are well distributed throughout the city.

COURTS



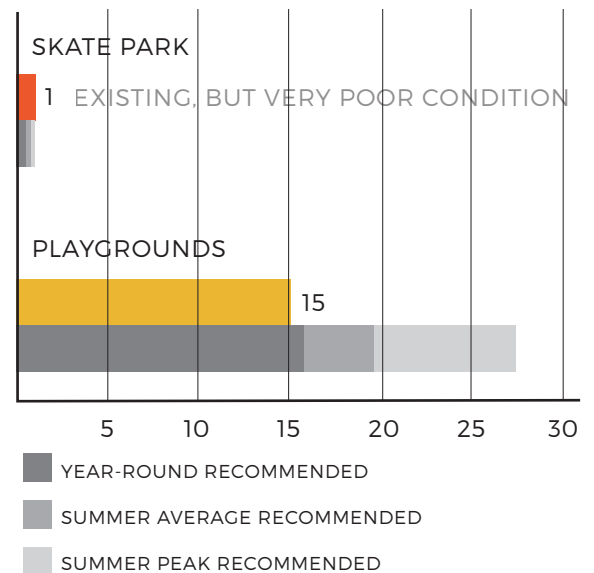
Overall, Newport has a sufficient number of volleyball, tennis, and basketball courts to meet demand, but like fields, the distribution of these active recreation elements varies across the city. Some areas are well-served, but others have less access to courts. For example, basketball is a particular deficit in the North End.

Newport is exceptionally well-served by public tennis courts. In fact, the seventeen courts in the city are more than double the recommended number to meet peak summer demand! A public bid is currently out to convert one tennis court at Hunter Park to four pickleball courts,¹ renovate the tennis court and basketball half court and to provide better ADA access. The project is partially funded with a RIDEM Open Space grant.

- Newport is well-served for volleyball, basketball, and tennis courts.
- Basketball, however, is lacking in some parts of the city.

¹ Pickleball is a sport that is growing in popularity among many age groups

PLAY



Newport has an appropriate number of playgrounds to meet recommendations, but their distribution is not equal throughout the city. The North End has fewer playgrounds, but the highest number of children.

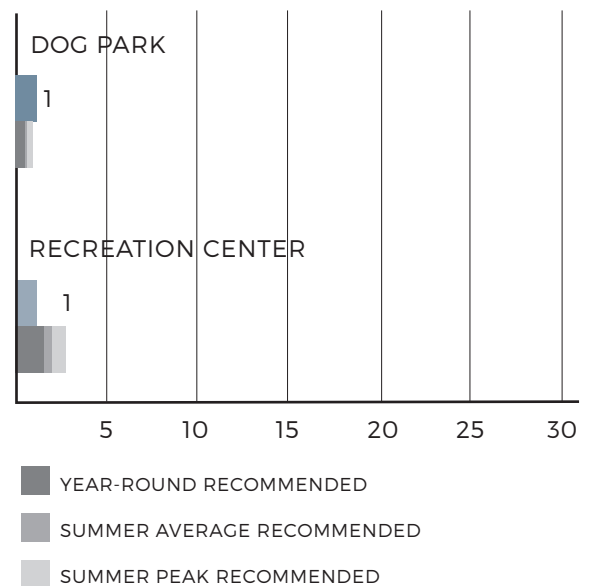
One skate park in Newport is sufficient to meet recommended demand, but the existing skate park is in need of a new, permanent home. The existing location at Easton’s beach is prone to sand accumulation, contributing to the poor overall condition of the facility. A more central location would be closer to potential youth users and easier to maintain.

More broadly, play and games opportunities are a gap in Newport’s open space system. Bocce courts, horseshoe pits, or lawn game areas are offered in many open space

systems around the country. These areas provide opportunities for all ages to play and enjoy being outside.

Overall, gaps in playgrounds are handicapped accessibility, universal design, and equipment suitable for two to five year old children. Currently, the majority of playgrounds are intended for five to twelve year olds; there are few options for younger children, although a pending CDBG grant application would create a 2-5 year old playground in MLK Park. In addition, an ongoing initiative by the City is focusing on making playgrounds more accessible. Accessibility considerations are access to play equipment (ramps, not stairs), interesting play amenities at ground level, and playground surfaces that are stable and level (for example, rubber surfacing rather than mulch or dirt).

SINGLE USE SPACES

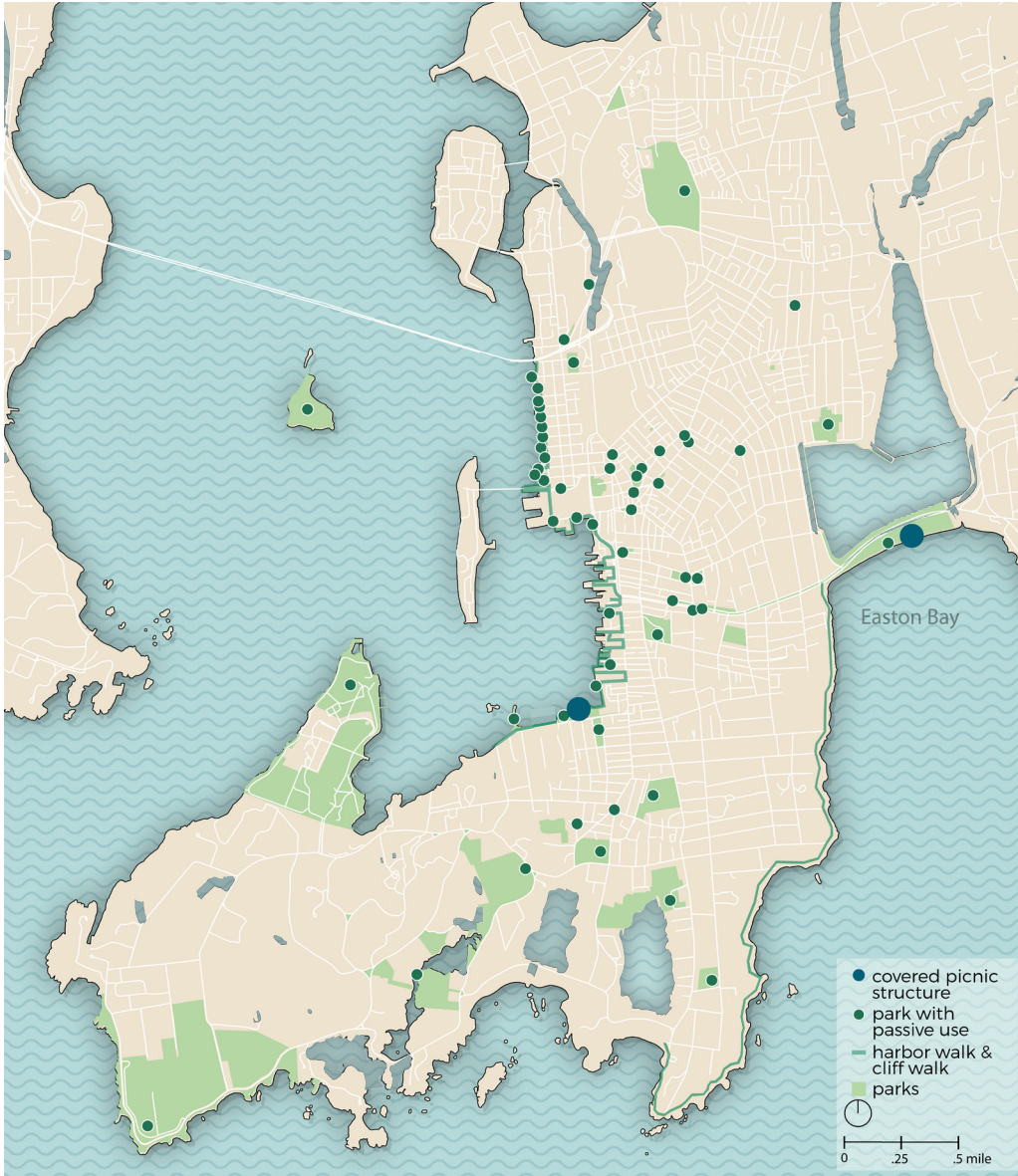


Single use spaces are recreational open spaces that have a particular, singular focus – like dog park or a recreational center. Newport has one recreation center and one dog park, which meets recommended numbers for both kinds of public space for a city of Newport’s size. The recreation center is centrally located.

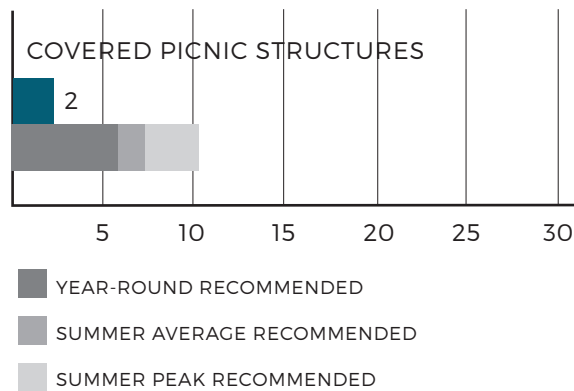
The dog park is currently located on state-owned land in an industrial area at the end of JT Connell Hwy. A permanent home for the dog park is needed, ideally one that would be within walking distance of more homes.

- Newport has about the recommended numbers of these areas.
- The dog park is in need of a permanent home.

Passive Enjoyment



◦ Newport is under-served in covered picnic structures.





In addition to opportunities for active recreation, a key role of parks is to provide places for passive enjoyment. Park features like benches, open lawns, shade, and pathways contribute to its ability to provide high quality places for enjoying scenic views, relaxing with friends, taking a walk, or spending a quiet moment alone. Many of Newport's parks, including many of its waterfront parks, offer passive enjoyment opportunities.

A gap exists in the availability of covered picnic shelters. Currently, Newport offers two shelters (one at King Park and one at Easton's Beach), but recommendations

suggest that at least five are needed to meet year-round demand, with an additional two to five needed to accommodate increased demand in the summer. Covered picnic areas can also be opportunities for rental income, which can help support the overall park network financially.

Quality Scorecard

A = Good

B = Fair

C = Poor

OVERALL MAINTENANCE



Overall, maintenance of Newport's parks, state parks, and open space is very good. Lawns are mowed frequently, and the overall appearance is well-kept and tidy. Almost all parks have trash cans and dog pick-up bags.

PLAY- GROUND S



Newport's playgrounds generally have good condition equipment, but the underlying surfaces in many parks are uneven from heavy use. For example, merry-go-rounds or swing sets like the ones in Aquidneck Park have trenches worn around them from many hours of play. Playground surfaces like dirt, mulch, or sand are more prone to long-term erosion. These uneven surfaces can present tripping hazards. In addition, these kinds of surfaces are not accessible for individuals in wheelchairs.

SPORTS FIELDS & COURTS



Most of Newport's fields and courts are in good condition, although a few baseball/softball fields have uneven terrain (ex. Murphy Field). The Skate Park and Roger's High School running track, however, are in very poor condition. The track has been condemned and cannot be used, and there are no other tracks in Newport. The volleyball court at Miantonomi Park is currently missing a net and has a very uneven surface due to water erosion.

METHODOLOGY DETAILS: These qualitative rankings are based upon the Parks Inventory. During this inventory, our team visited each park and recorded quantitative and qualitative information. Quality of vegetation, paths/sidewalks, playgrounds, sports fields/courts, and overall maintenance was evaluated on a scale of 1 – Good (A), 2 – Fair (B), 3 – Poor (C), or 4 – Failing (F) (unusable). These values were averaged each category for all parks to determine the overall park system score.

TREES, GRASSES, & SHRUBS



Overall, vegetation in parks is healthy and in good condition. A few parks have gaps in grass coverage. For example, King Park has been dealing with the effects of higher tides that overwhelm the seawall. The mowed lawns that are typically associated with parks are not as tolerant to salt water, so many areas of King Park have patchy grass and dirt. Adapting the grass and other vegetation at King Park to salt-tolerant species would allow for a healthier green park.

PATHS & SIDEWALKS



The condition of paths and sidewalks varies across the system. Some parks have sidewalks that are in good conditions (ex. Touro Park), but other parks have sidewalks that are uneven or in poor condition (ex. King Park). The southern portion of the Harbor Walk is especially in need of repair. Much of this stretch has significant erosion issues along the edges and irregular surfaces. This stretch would be very difficult to traverse in a wheelchair.

In addition, many neighborhood and community parks lack sidewalks within the park. For example, Braga Field's playground, picnic tables, and tennis courts require walking across grass; there are no sidewalks connecting park amenities.

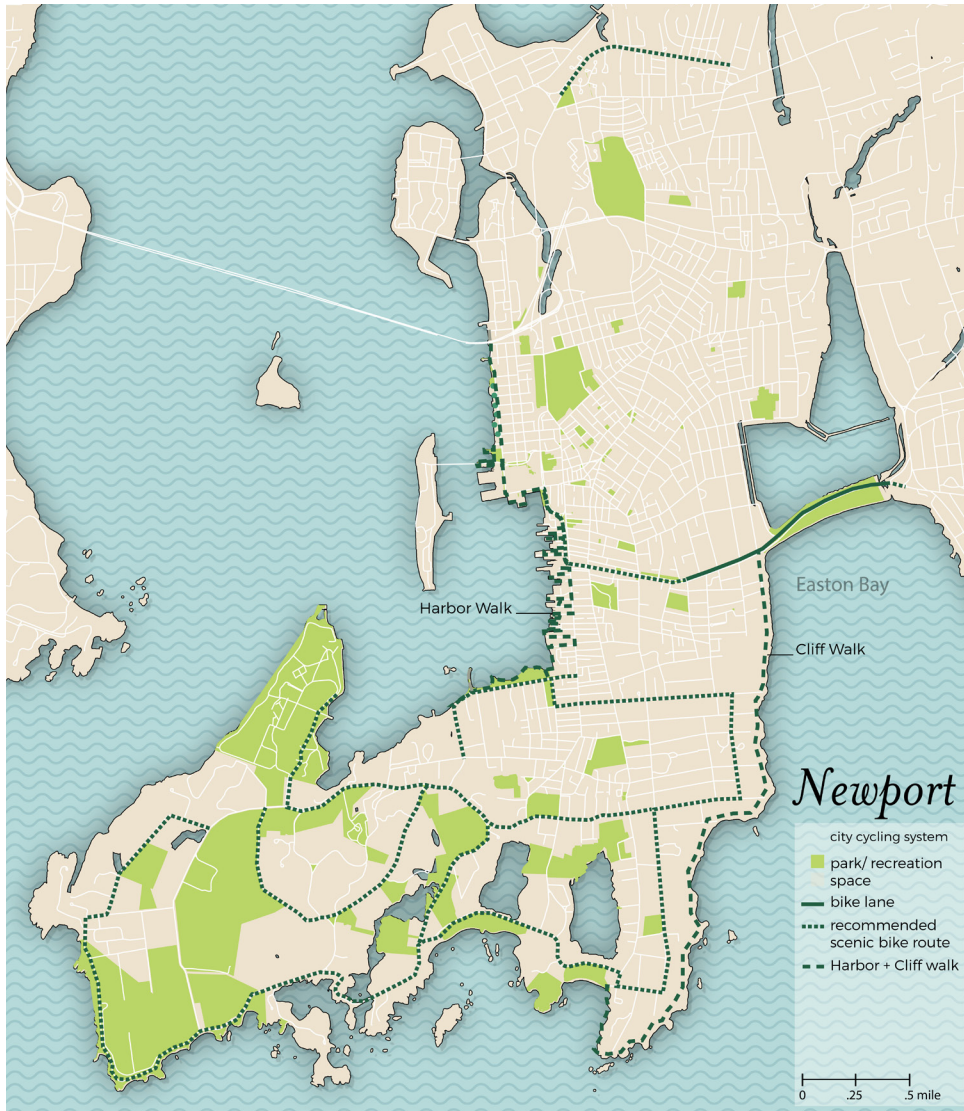
Internal paths provide an even walking surface that can help the park be accessible to a broader range of users, and it can also provide opportunities for casual walking and passive enjoyment.

Outside of parks, stakeholder groups and the public have noted that city sidewalks are similarly mixed in quality. In some places, uneven sidewalks can make walking at night hazardous. Improving the overall city-wide pedestrian network is important to promote walkable access to parks.

Sidewalk improvements are also critical to create a healthy, walkable environment and to connect all the cultural, economic and recreational resources Newport has to offer.

Connectivity

STREETS, PATHS, AND OTHER CONNECTIONS



Newport is characterized by a number of unique connective spaces, including tree-lined boulevards like Bellevue Avenue, the dramatic waterside Cliff Walk, and other streets and alleys. Street right-of-ways total approximately 7.6% of Newport's land area (about 375 acres).

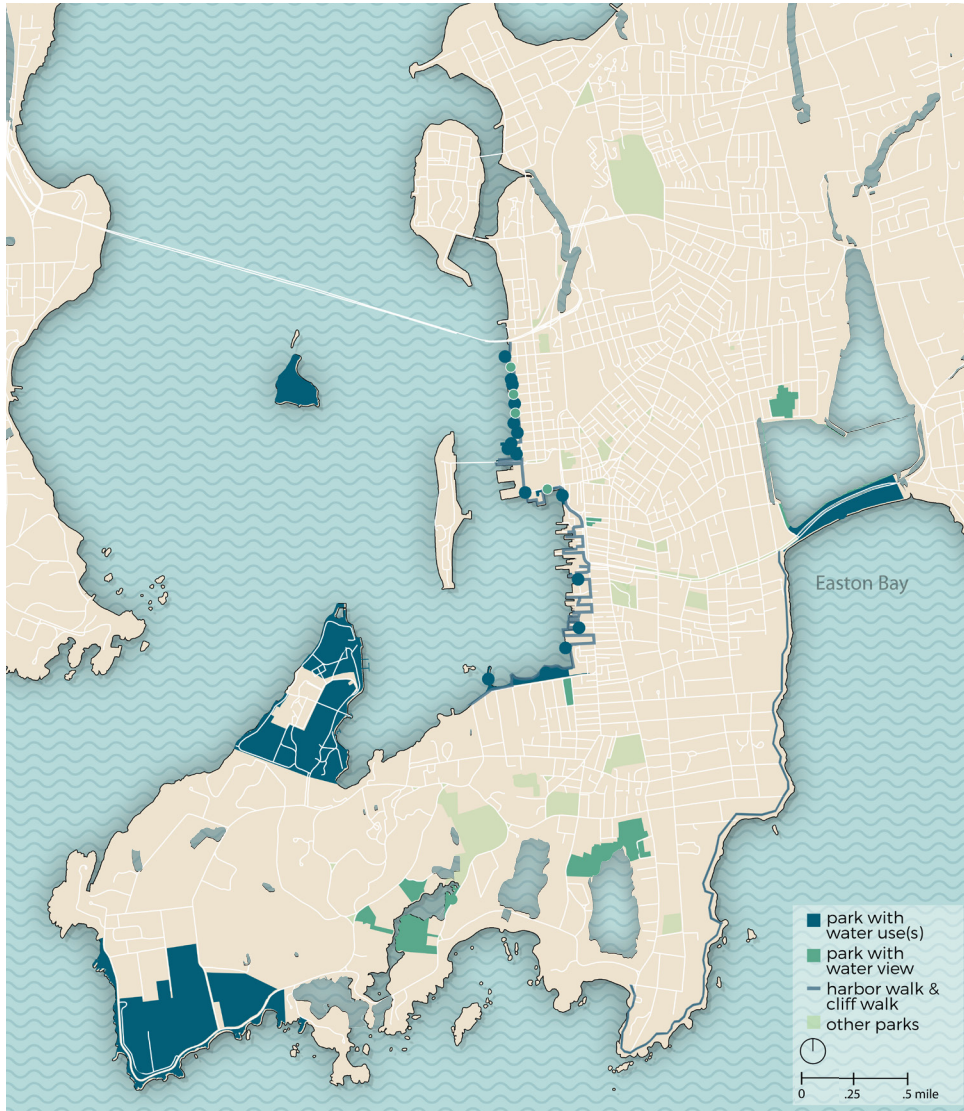
Connectivity also has much room for improvement. The Harbor Walk lacks the "critical mass" of connected segments to fulfill its potential role in Newport. There are dedicated or shared bike lanes on only a few streets including Memorial Boulevard and a portion of American's Cup Ave, demonstrating the need for many more, safe bike connections to build a more robust network. Beyond formal bicycle paths, opportunities exist to promote a greater bicycle culture with more sharing of existing roadways. Sidewalk conditions are challenging to pedestrians in some locations and can also be improved.

Local sidewalks and paths



Identifying opportunities to improve connectivity, make travel safer for bicyclists and walkers, and enhance the quality of streets as public spaces will be opportunities to explore in the next stages of this open space master planning process.

LAND AND WATER CONNECTIVITY



As Olmsted noted in his early plan, the visual and physical connections between water and land are an important part of Newport's identity. Open spaces, parks and walkways play an important role in connecting Newport to the water, offering scenic views, public waterside access, and opportunities for active uses such as swimming, fishing, boating, and more. Not all of Newport is equally served by waterfront public spaces; the North End neighborhoods have a notable lack of water connection and access compared to other parts of the city.



King Park and the Newport Harbor (left) and Gooseneck Cover (right)

Resiliency & Ecology

Ecological Analysis

Newport has the least green space on Aquidneck Island, so each of Newport's open spaces is important from an ecological perspective.

ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Beyond recreational and passive enjoyment uses, open spaces and trees also contribute to the environmental health of Newport. All types of open space in Newport were considered in the ecological analysis, including: lands for public use (parks/recreational open space, privately owned public spaces, cemeteries, and other public open spaces), as well as private and institutional open space.

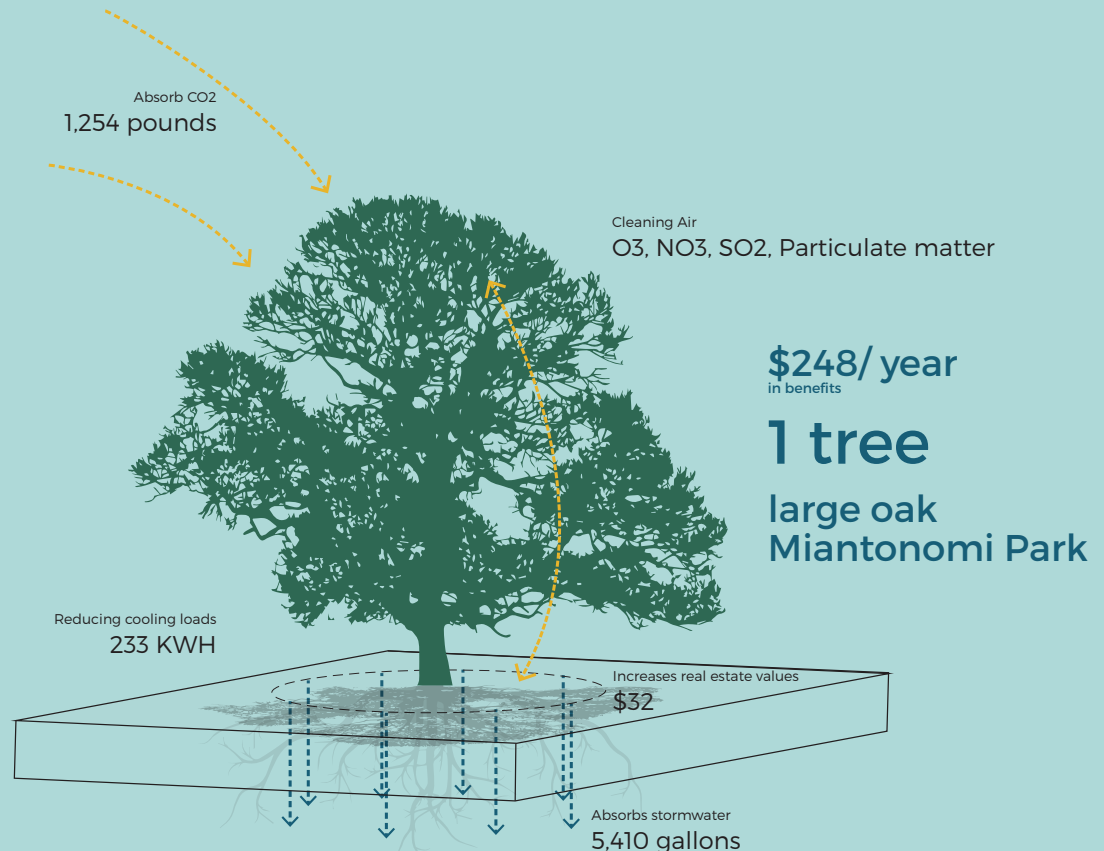
Ecological & resiliency functions of trees & open space:

Trees and open spaces not only provide aesthetic and recreational benefits to our cities and towns; they also have important environmental functions. They absorb and clean stormwater, cleanse the air of pollutants, provide habitat to local and migrating wildlife, lower air temperatures and offer shade for human comfort. Open spaces and trees also contribute to resiliency by buffering storm surge, mitigating flooding, and reducing erosion during storm events.

ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF A SINGLE TREE

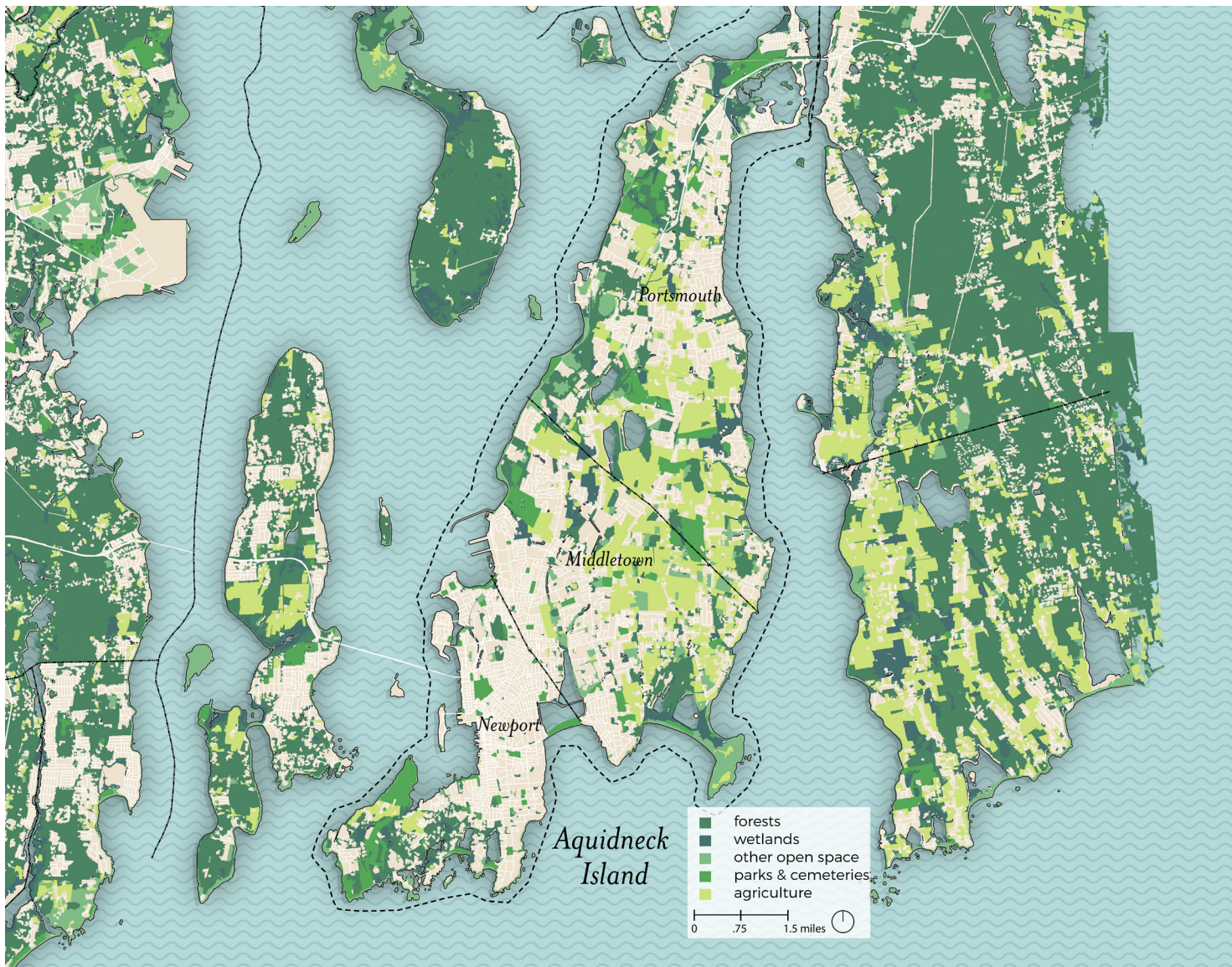
- Absorbing stormwater
- Cleaning air
- Absorbing carbon dioxide
- Providing habitat for local animals and migrating birds

Values calculated with National Tree Benefit Calculator: (www.treebenefits.com/calculator/). Tree information from Newport Tree Map.)





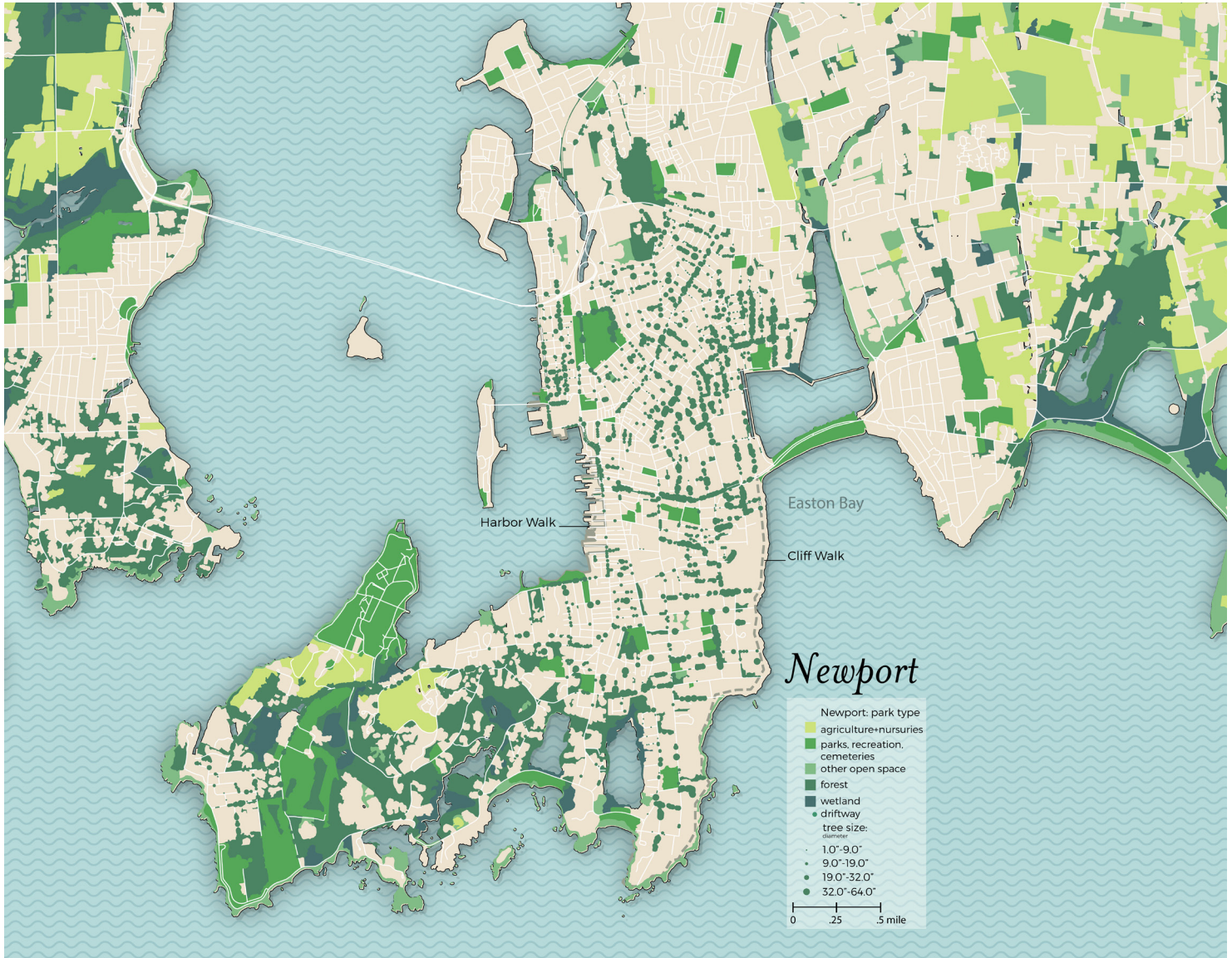
Green Space



AQUIDNECK ISLAND ECOLOGY

Aquidneck Island has a large amount of open space, including forests, wetlands, parks, cemeteries, agricultural land, vacant land, and other types. Overall, 56% of Aquidneck Island is open space (a total of 13,623 acres). However, much of this open space remains susceptible to development; only 20% of Aquidneck Island is protected open space.

The City of Newport is the most densely developed area with the least amount of green space on the Island, making each of Newport's open spaces crucial from an environmental perspective. To improve the ecological function of Newport's open space system, green corridors connecting open spaces, such as "green streets," and multi-functional open spaces that serve people's recreational needs as well as environmental function are essential.



OPEN SPACE PATTERNS

When examining the network of trees, parks and open spaces in the City of Newport, the downtown core of the City is more densely developed with patches of small parks and street trees, while the southern areas have a greater amount of contiguous open space and diversity of landscape types. The Northern part of the City has fewer dispersed open spaces to serve the community. The

City faces challenges of invasive species that limit habitat value, aging trees that will need a succession plan, and narrow, urban streets that limit opportunities for vegetation. Migratory birds and other species need continuous habitat zones. Continued sub-division of property in the south end of the island creates an imbalance in connective hydrology and habitat.

Green Infrastructure

INITIATIVES

Several green infrastructure projects are underway or in discussion across Newport:

- **Broadway redesign:** Focus is on incorporating bioswales and permeable pavement along the street.
- **Marine Ave:** Proposed space utilizing bio-retention basins and a permeable paving path as access to the Cliff Walk.
- **City Yard:** Improvements made to reduce impervious surfaces and to add recharge zones (areas that focus on allowing the ground to absorb more rainfall).
- **Pine Street Driftway:** Preliminary discussion with Save the Bay about the potential for a future green infrastructure opportunity.
- **40 Steps:** Planned installation of gravel-lok permeable paving.





Climate Change



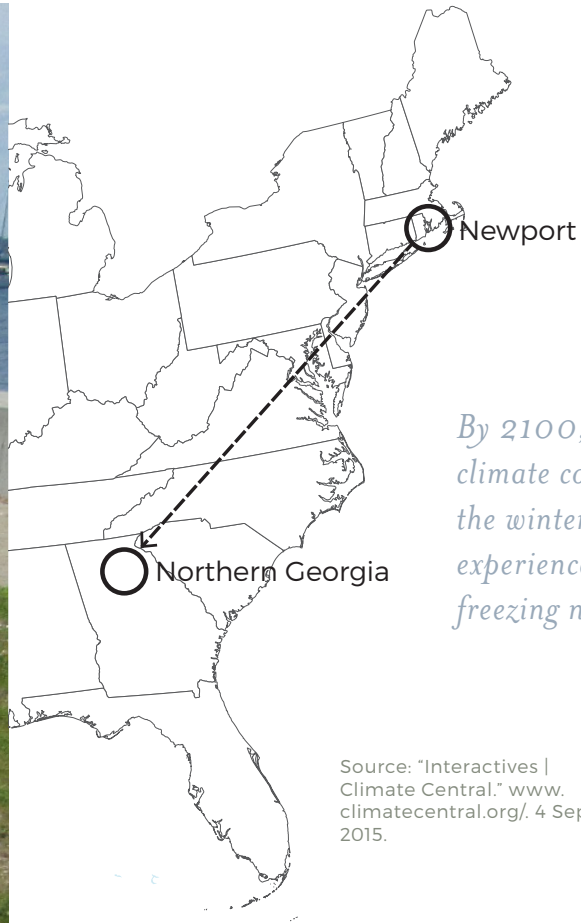
King Park is already showing the impacts of higher seas

CLIMATE CHANGE 101

Climate change is a shift in climate patterns believed to be caused by rising levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Effects of climate change can include rising global temperatures, and more extreme weather patterns such as drought, flood, storms, and heat waves. Climate change also has an impact on the planet's water bodies, causing oceans to warm and become more acidic, ice caps to melt, and sea levels to rise. (Source: <http://www3.epa.gov/climatechange/basics/>)

PROJECTIONS FOR NEWPORT AND RHODE ISLAND

As a coastal city, Newport is particularly threatened by climate change. According to Climate Central, Rhode Island is the 16th fastest warming state, estimated at +0.5 degrees per decade. By 2100, rising temperatures are projected to make the winter climate in Rhode Island more like northern Georgia. This would mean fewer nights when the temperature drops below freezing—currently there is an average of 111 nights below freezing; by 2100 this could be only 49 nights annually.



Shifting weather patterns are also projected; Rhode Island leads the nation with a 76% increase in heavy downpours since 1950.¹ This shift could mean more localized flash flooding and erosion. Newport's low-lying coastal neighborhoods and parks will be impacted by sea level rise and greater flooding from storm surge.

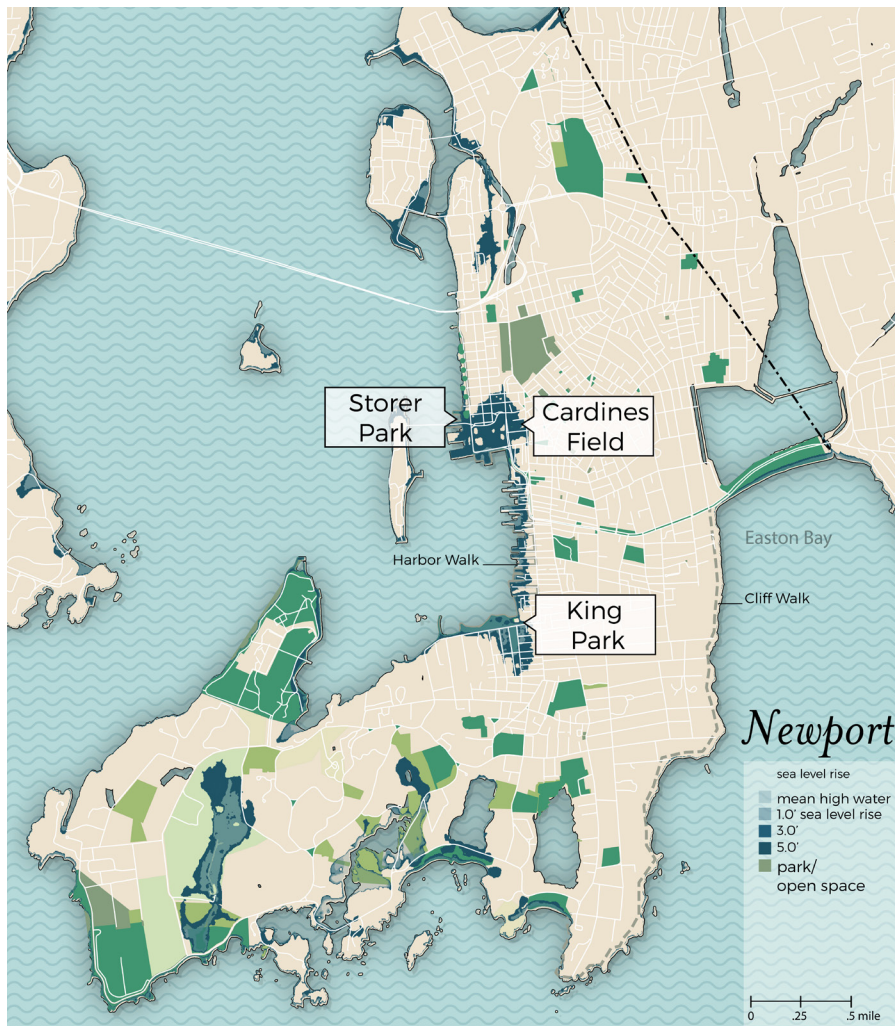


Downtown and central Newport is the most vulnerable to rising seas.

¹ Source: "Interactives | Climate Central." Interactives | Climate Central. Web. 4 Sept. 2015.

Climate Change

SEA LEVEL RISE



2030: 0.1'-0.5' SLR projected

2050: 0.3'-1.4' SLR projected

2100: 0.7'-4.9' SLR

Source: "Modified bathtub" coastal inundation analyses conducted by the NOAA Coastal Services Center and the RI Division of Planning. <http://corpsclimate.us/ccaceslcurves.cfm>

Exposed Assets

1' Sea Rise

- 29 acres city-wide
- 15 acres of park space
- 27 parks/open space

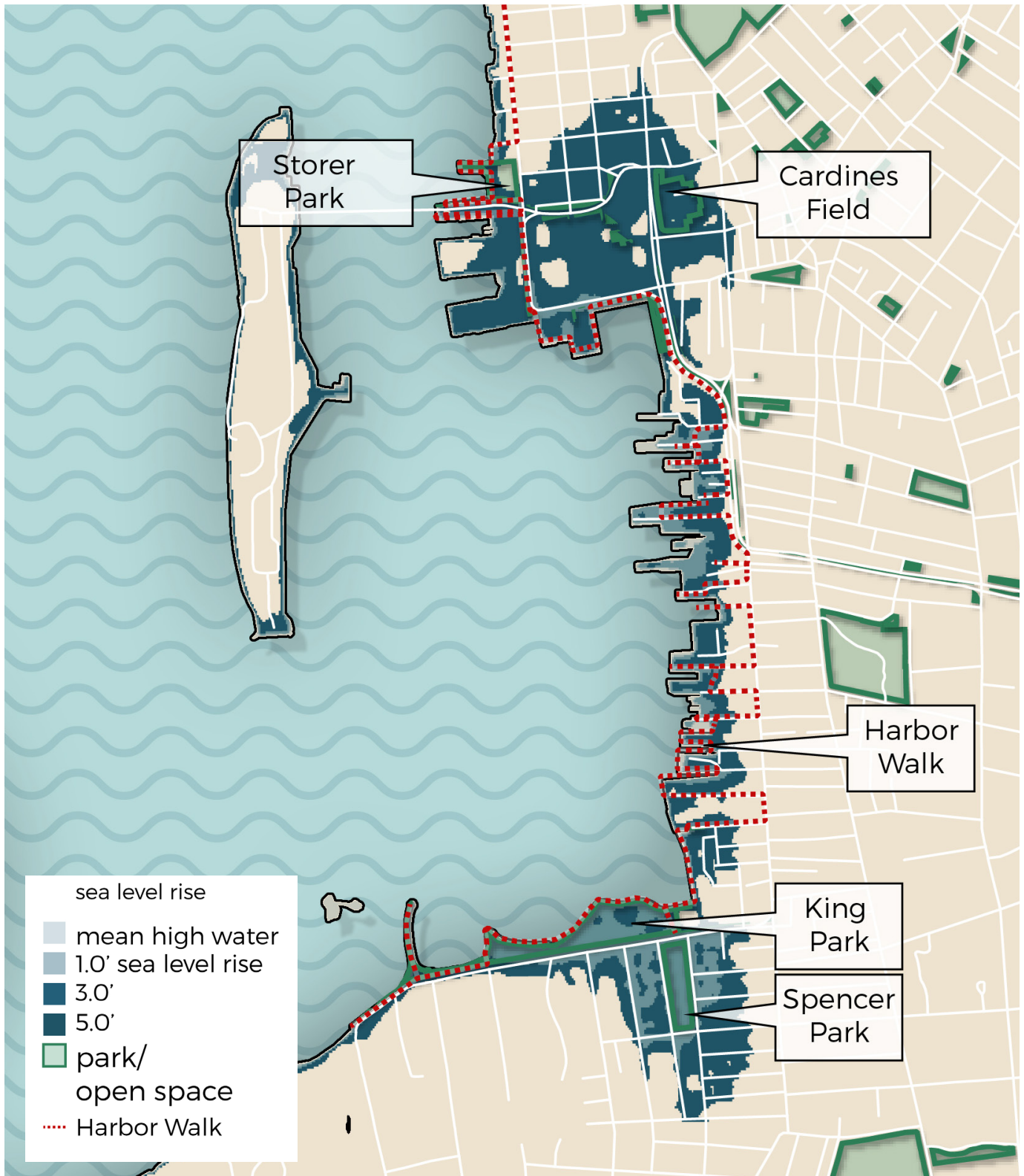
3' Sea Rise

- 154 acres city-wide
- 68 acres of park space
- 32 parks/open space
- 1 playground
- 2 sport fields

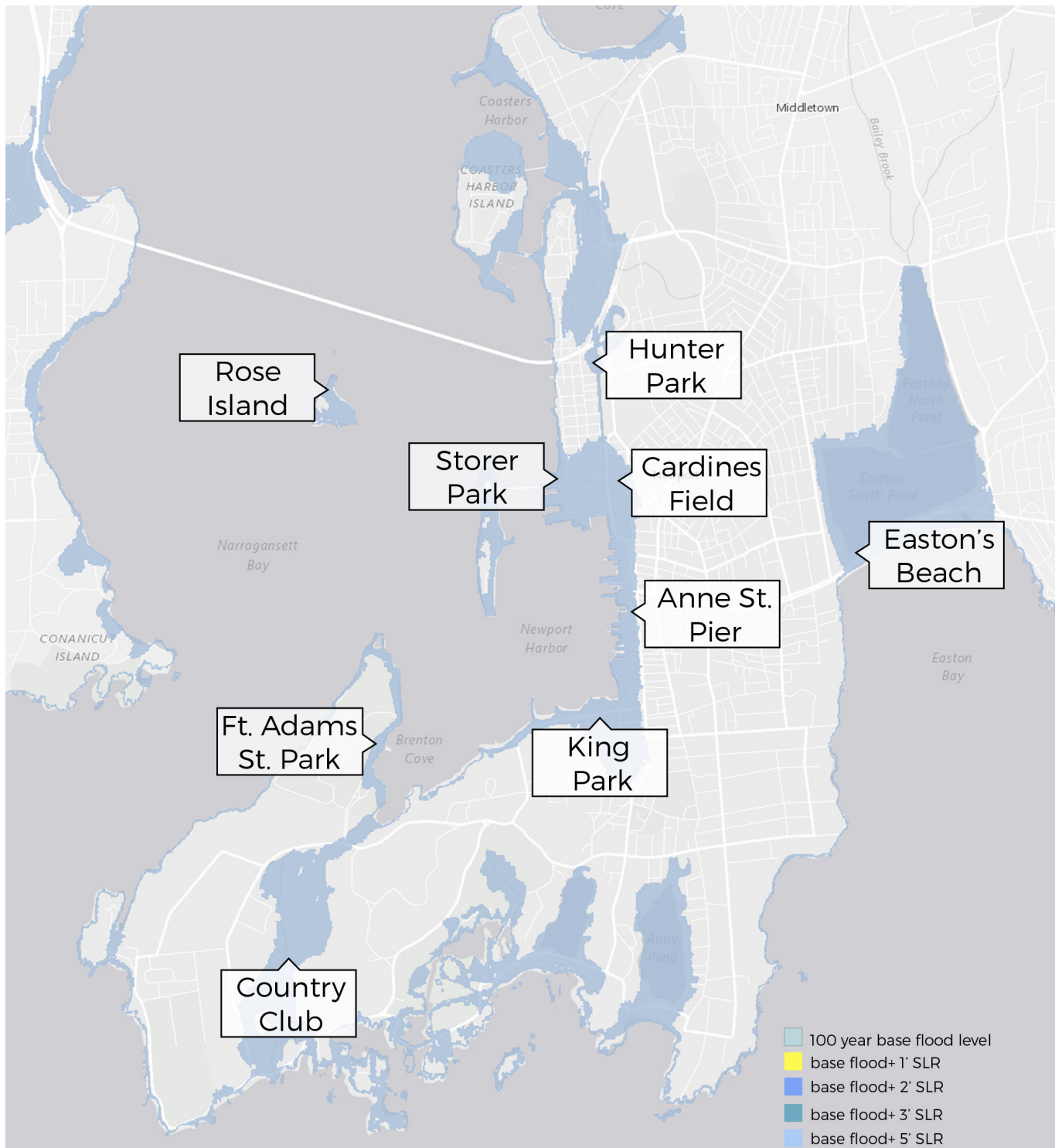
5' Sea Rise

- 439 acres city-wide
- 272 acres of park space
- 51 parks/open space
- 2 playgrounds
- 4 fields/courts

DETAIL OF SEA LEVEL RISE: DOWNTOWN NEWPORT



100-YEAR FLOOD (WITH SEA LEVEL RISE)



In addition to baseline sea level rise, storm surge poses an additional threat to the coastal City of Newport. Flooding from storm surge will worsen in the future as rising sea levels create a higher starting point for coastal flooding.

Downtown and many of Newport's waterfront parks are at risk, including Hunter Park, Storer Park, Cardines Field, Easton's Beach, King Park, Ft. Adams State Park, the Country Club, and Rose Island.

Bowen's Wharf- Oct 2012 (Sandy)



Bowen's Wharf- Typical Day



Sub-Area Analysis

North End

NORTH END OPEN SPACE FINDINGS:

- A high demand for open space, based on the community's dense character and demographic factors like age and income.
- A low supply of open space, especially small-scale and neighborhood parks. These are the types of parks that are most important for providing walkable recreation activities for residents. Miantonomi Park functions in a similar way to many residents, but it is not large enough to meet all needs and it is not an easy walk from all parts of the North End. Additional parks in other parts of the North End are needed to more fully meet neighborhood open space needs.
- A shortage of active recreational opportunities, especially basketball courts, fields, and playgrounds for the year-round population. Based on quantitative analysis,¹ gaps include:
 - Playgrounds (gap of 7-8)
 - Baseball / Softball fields (gap of 2-3)
 - Soccer/Football fields (gap of 3)
 - Basketball (gap of 3)
 - Tennis courts (gap of 2)
 - Picnic shelters (gap of 2-3)
 - Recreation center (gap of 1)

These findings are based on national averages; additional input from North End residents is needed to confirm these gaps.

¹ Analysis methodology: Sub-area analysis is based upon populations and demographic characteristics. The overall city need calculated for Newport was allocated across sub-areas based on their population size and characteristics (including children and youth). (See the "Park Supply City-wide" section above for more information on city-wide demand calculations.) Sub-area boundaries are based on census tracts. For example, North End has 44% of population, so their neighborhood park need is 44% of total city demand. The North End's population includes 53% of the city-wide population aged fourteen or less, translating into a demand of about 8 playgrounds of the city-wide demand for 16. These demand numbers were compared with the existing supply of public open spaces/amenities to determine gaps or surpluses. (Data sources: 2013 ACS, 5 year estimates (Census Tracts); Sasaki Parks Inventory; PRORAGIS Database)

For example, numbers could suggest a gap in tennis courts, but this gap is only a problem if residents have unmet desires for tennis courts.

Addressing gaps is possible by adding additional recreation amenities in the North End or improving connectivity to other amenities nearby (for example, Hunter Park).

- Strong historic legacy: Miantonomi Park was one of the highlights of Olmsted's 1913 plan. Not all of this significant open space, however, is currently protected permanently by easements/restrictions. The Newport Housing Authority owns part of the forested area.
- Balancing ecological and recreational needs: Miantonomi is an important open space in terms of wildlife habitat. It is a beloved park to birders. How can we best balance human recreation with habitat?
- Connectivity challenges: no dedicated bicycling lanes, and with low amounts of green space in the neighborhood. Further, not all residents are within walking distance of a park. Improving the connection to Pell School is also an opportunity.
- No public water access points and fewer views of the water compared to many other parts of Newport.
- Trees: A shortage of street trees compared to other parts of Newport.
- Risk of flooding, especially from storm surge. The risk will increase in the future as average sea levels are higher (up to 6 inches higher by 2035, and 1 to 5 feet by 2100²).

² Sea level increases are relative to 2015. State-accepted data sources, including NOAA and USACE. <http://corpsclimate.us/ccaceslcurves.cfm>. Flood risk data (current and future) from STORMTOOLS for Beginners ("Is my property vulnerable to Storm Surge?") www.beachsamp.org/resources/stormtools/



Miantonomi
Park

Central Newport & Downtown

CENTRAL NEWPORT & DOWNTOWN FINDINGS:

- The central part of Newport is the most well-served by open space, especially in terms of the number of parks.
- The diversity and supply of open space is adequate for year-residents. The existing supply of open space almost exactly matches demand for mini, neighborhood, and community parks.
- Amenities are generally well-aligned with year-round population demand. Based on quantitative analysis, only a few gaps exist in picnic shelters (gap of 1) and soccer/football fields (gap of 1). National averages suggest the area is significantly oversupplied in tennis courts (surplus of 9), baseball/softball fields (surplus of 4-5), and playgrounds (surplus of 7-8). The skate park at Easton's Beach is in need of a permanent home.
- Central Newport includes many water access points and water views from its many waterfront parks.
- The Harbor Walk is a great potential amenity for the City, but connectivity and wayfinding could be improved.
- The impacts of sea level rise will have the greatest impact in this part of Newport. Flooding at high tides is already impacting King Park.
- In addition, storm surge is also a significant risk to this part of Newport, especially the areas around the harbor.
- Many parts of this area benefit from mini-parks, but these small parks can also require disproportionately high maintenance efforts.
- This part of town plays a significant role economically, especially for tourism, and the potential could be even greater with improvements to the Harbor Walk.
- Historic legacy: many of the oldest open spaces in Newport are located Downtown, and the Harbor reflects the historic origin and economic drive of the City. This area reflects the influence of Olmsted's 1913 plan, which helped improved street character and building setbacks. Key historic parks in this area include Washington Square, Cardines Field, Queen Anne Square, the Liberty Tree in Ellery Park, Touro Park, Aquidneck Park, and the driftways. In addition, many of the oldest cemeteries are located in this part of town, and many of have a high need for headstone restoration.
- Trees: Many of the trees planted in the 1800s to early 1900s are aging. Centennial Beeches planted in the Gilded Age, for example, are nearing the end of their lifespans. Bellevue Avenue and other parts of Downtown reflect the need to think ahead to the next generation of Newport's urban forest.

With dense development in many parts of central Newport, green streets play an especially important role in open space for residents and visitors. The narrow width of many of the city's earliest streets, however, leaves little room for new street trees.
- Connectivity: This area contains the only two existing bicycle lanes in the city (Memorial Boulevard, and America's Cup Avenue), but could benefit from additional bicycle lanes and improved sidewalks in many areas. This part of Newport also plays an important connectivity role in bringing visitors to Fort Adams, Brenton Point, and other destinations in the southern part of Newport. Improving transportation from Downtown to Fort Adams especially for festivals and events has been identified as a need.



King Park

Southern Newport/ Ocean Drive Area

SOUTHERN NEWPORT FINDINGS:

- Open space supply: The southern part of Newport benefits from a tremendous availability of community and regional parks. Mini parks and neighborhood park acreage well-aligned with year-round demand. With Brenton Point and Fort Adams State Parks, this area has the greatest overall amount of open space in Newport.
- Based on a quantitative analysis, southern Newport has sufficient recreation elements and main amenities to meet demand. The only shortages exist in picnic shelters and playgrounds, both short by one.
- Historic legacy: Southern Newport reflects the influence of Olmsted's plan, especially the importance of Ocean Drive and the creation of open spaces like Almy Pond. Other historic open spaces include Morton Park designed by Olmsted, Fort Adams, and Brenton Point.
- Trees: In the southern part of Newport, Bellevue Ave and historic properties face similar challenges with aging Gilded Age trees as central parts of the city.
- Connectivity: Improving connectivity in this area is especially significant for Ocean Drive to make it safer for bicyclists and pedestrians. In addition, the Cliff Walk could benefit from improvements along its southern end, including more options for return transportation, more well defined, attractive entry points from the ends of local streets, and wayfinding from Bellevue Avenue.
- Water quality: Many of the inlets along the southern coast are listed as impaired wetlands.¹ Improvements like those at Goose Cove are helping restore natural water flow improving water quality. Additional opportunities to improve water quality include restoration around Almy Pond, especially on the eastern shore in the unbuilt subdivision.
- Habitat: Continued sub-division of property in this part of Newport is placing habitat at risk.

¹ Source: Degraded Coastal Wetlands of Narragansett Bay (RI Dept. of Environmental Management, Narragansett Bay Estuary Program, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council, and RI Department of Environmental Management), 2003 revision



**Brenton Point
State Park**

Community Feedback

Public Meeting 1

Feedback Summary

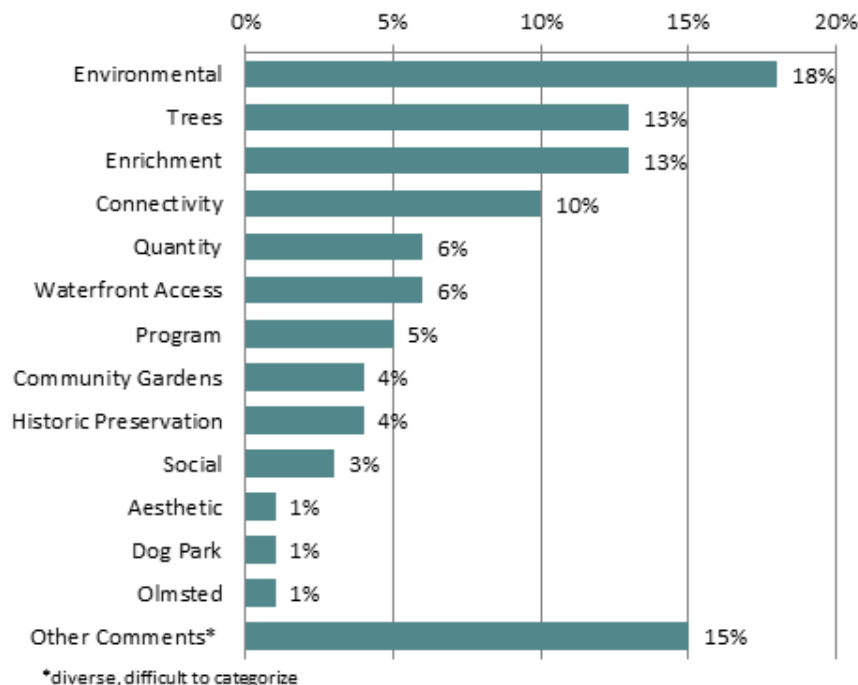
COMMUNITY MEETING #1

Total Attendees: approximately 150-160

Attendees provided feedback on three questions:

- **Historic Legacy:** What are the challenges and opportunities of the open space network's rich historic legacy?
- **Current Needs:** What are the current needs of Newport's trees and open spaces? (Programming, amenities, access, etc..)
- **Future resilient network:** Looking ahead, what are the opportunities to create a more resilient open space network?

Community Feedback: Top Themes from Community Meeting #1



The numbers in the table reflect the total number of comments, not necessarily cards. Each comment was analyzed independently because in many cases there were multiple comments/bullet points per card such that categorizing the entire card together would have not fully captured the breadth of ideas.



Historic Legacy

Current Needs

Future Resilient Network ?

Three overlapping cards with lined writing areas. The first card is titled "Historic Legacy" and features a background image of a map. The second card is titled "Current Needs" and features a background image of green trees. The third card is titled "Future Resilient Network" and features a background image of a harbor with boats and a large question mark.

All Feedback

COMMENTS FROM COMMUNITY MEETING #1

THEME	DESCRIPTION	#	%
Environmental	Comments about resiliency, green infrastructure, stormwater runoff, sea level rise, habitats, native plantings, etc.	49	18%
Other Comments	General comments, difficult to categorize – ideas for specific parks and locations, suggestions for other cities to look at, etc.	40	15%
Trees	Comments about wanting more trees, tree replacement, adoption programs, tree giveaways, disease treatment & prevention, etc.	34	13%
Enrichment / Park Investment	Comments that request more investment in current parks – more benches, lighting, signage / wayfinding, parking, activities, picnic areas, park programming, public art, etc.	34	13%
Connectivity	Comments about increasing walkability and bike-friendly areas within Newport, including ideas like walking circuits, converting rail to trail, pedestrian-only downtown / Thames, bike lanes and complete streets. Of these 27 comments, 12 of them specifically related to biking alone.	27	10%
Quantity	Requests for an increased number of parks and open space areas – specifically basketball courts, pocket parks, dog parks, and kid-friendly play areas.	16	6%
Waterfront Access	Multiple requests for the Harbor Walk to be completed, as well as better waterfront access in the North End	15	6%
Program	Ideas for complementary city-wide programs that relate to open space – i.e., school children learning how to swim, funding increases for Parks & Rec, tax credits for permeable paving, development trade-offs to promote open space, encouraging individuals to purchase disaster insurance, etc.	14	5%
Community Gardens	Specific requests for community gardens throughout Newport	11	4%
Historic Preservation	Requests to preserve historic sites or features (Cardine's Field, Liberty Square, historic walls, Rochambeau monument, etc.)	11	4%
Social	Comments recognizing the breadth of demographics who use parks (families, lower income, young people)	8	3%
Aesthetic	Ideas for general aesthetic of parks (i.e., quiet, shady, no billboards, boulevards)	4	1%
Dog Park	Specific requests for more or closer dog parks	3	1%
Olmsted	Comments recognizing importance of preserving and sharing Olmsted's vision	2	1%
TOTAL		268	100%

Complete List of Comments:

CARD TYPE	COMMENT
Historic Legacy	Roof gardens on new buildings
Historic Legacy	Beauty, boulevards, strolling, shade, vistas, quiet / ease, variety
Historic Legacy	Maintain historic properties and their landscapes
Historic Legacy	Replace dying specimen trees
Historic Legacy	Trees -- preserving or continuing the legacy of species diversity and ongoing planting strategy to avoid mass die out (beeches currently)
Historic Legacy	Transform rail tracks to pedestrian and bike paths to better connect North and South ends of Newport
Historic Legacy	Share widely what Olmsteds wrote and thought
Historic Legacy	How do we plan for the future of Newport's special trees / perpetuate that cultural legacy?
Historic Legacy	Preservation limits the changes that can be made
Historic Legacy	Parks programming can be used to tell the story of our unique history
Historic Legacy	Preserve critical landscape and building assets like Cardine's Field
Historic Legacy	Protecting and replenishing old trees (some are being taken down on private property)
Historic Legacy	Active young families; how do they fit?
Historic Legacy	Focused on auto accessibility
Historic Legacy	Water access in the North End
Historic Legacy	Public art that allows for interactive and engaging historic interpretations
Historic Legacy	Preserve historic walls!
Historic Legacy	Activate city parks with art and seating; bring back park as "saloon"
Historic Legacy	Quaker Meeting House -- unmarked graveyard
Historic Legacy	Picnic
Historic Legacy	Protect historic legacy including tree species
Historic Legacy	Learn about protecting against pests and hydrating (with stormwater barrels) older trees (dying beeches common in Newport hydration helps with pest control)
Historic Legacy	Many historic structures will be damaged / destroyed by future major storms (i.e., Lower Thames Street is very exposed to that possibility)
Historic Legacy	Underwater legacy??
Historic Legacy	Maintain Olmsted vision
Historic Legacy	Replacing trees

Historic Legacy	Replacing trees
Historic Legacy	Liberty Square, which has a heritage of freedom from ownership, endowing it with essential liberty, since 1751c when Officers Thursten and Sherman of Newport Artillery Co. petitioned the Magistrates of Newport to eradicate the deed of this property from the town's land evidence records -- Brian Sullivan, 835.8741, Newportant Foundation
Historic Legacy	Waterfront properties sold off leaving no access to harbor
Historic Legacy	Preserve Naval Hospital property
Historic Legacy	Good to have explanatory signs on Bellevue Ave
Historic Legacy	Preservation of historic spaces with restriction
Current Needs	Identification of all parks in Newport with sign (small) and benches
Current Needs	More benches please for people to rest after or while walking
Current Needs	Parks -- we need soft lighting in some of the parks. Not bright lighting that encourages people to stay past closing, but more like the lights in Touro Park for safety
Current Needs	Community gardens!
Current Needs	Miantonomi Park?
Current Needs	Park near library?
Current Needs	Quaker Meeting House?
Current Needs	Year Round Programming
Current Needs	So struck by needs in North End
Current Needs	Walking circuits
Current Needs	Better marking of public access like suicide hill
Current Needs	More pocket parks that are convenient and accessible
Current Needs	Greater number of trees throughout city (tree-lined streets)
Current Needs	More bike lanes -- fewer cars on street
Current Needs	Bike path on island
Current Needs	Skating rink (ice)
Current Needs	Sidewalk improvements
Current Needs	Expansion of waterfront walk
Current Needs	Adopt-a-tree program for North End
Current Needs	Connect North End with rest of the city
Current Needs	Walking-bike -- RR track
Current Needs	Places to hold water during storms
Current Needs	Green infrastructure
Current Needs	Better bike safety / lanes; less cars / more bikes / designated lanes
Current Needs	More bike lanes to increase access to parks
Current Needs	Bike and bus route maps for families
Current Needs	Protect more bird habitats
Current Needs	More kid-friendly parks in the North End
Current Needs	Extend the bike path
Current Needs	Replace dead or dying trees

Current Needs	Community gardens
Current Needs	Benches in the shade
Current Needs	Even more tree replacement and management
Current Needs	Walking distance to parks
Current Needs	Opportunity to watch gardeners and children
Current Needs	Quiet
Current Needs	Closer dog parks
Current Needs	More responsive to environment needs
Current Needs	More street trees, carefully placed
Current Needs	More play space in the North End
Current Needs	More stormwater collection
Current Needs	Increase urban tree cover
Current Needs	Increase citizen education of tree health issues
Current Needs	Dogs in their own space to run and play
Current Needs	Publicize available trees
Current Needs	Add more sea walls along parks near water
Current Needs	Our greatest volume of open space is our streetscape. Connectivity via walking and biking is #1.
Current Needs	Plant more shade trees, especially out of major flood zones (so less likely to die)
Current Needs	Provide programs to encourage tree planting (ads, not just on City's website)
Current Needs	Don't forget Castle Mill! It has public access and the best water views
Current Needs	All school children learn how to swim so they can appreciate Newport and not drown in floods
Current Needs	All kids go out in harbor on boat to appreciate maritime history and Newport's recreation
Current Needs	Trade offs to promote open space, trees, walks in exchange for development
Current Needs	Ensuring residents use parks and open spaces -- its important to improve health of residents
Current Needs	Capture more stormwater runoff! (i.e., all new construction should capture 75% of rain / stormwater)
Current Needs	The city must begin using more permeable paving. We are so "built out" that we can't easily change. But as roads, sidewalks, etc. need changing, we should use permeable paving.
Current Needs	By Cardine's Field and America's Cup, continue trees down center instead of runway motif
Current Needs	Need federal disaster insurance to include floods, earthquakes, mudslides, volcanic. Enable reduced premiums.
Current Needs	Encourage individuals to purchase flood insurance, i.e. commercial and residential
Current Needs	Encourage and enable burial of electric wires so street trees can be planted on both sides of streets

Current Needs	Harbor walk continuous -- stops at Newport Harbor Inn
Current Needs	More bike paths
Current Needs	More benches
Current Needs	Harbor walk continuous
Current Needs	Power lines underground, more space for trees
Current Needs	Trees planted between parking spaces
Current Needs	Community garden
Current Needs	Bike paths and walking circuits throughout city
Current Needs	Marking harbor access routes
Current Needs	The issue of water quality affects beaches. Current system is deficient and requires an upgrade in water treatment.
Current Needs	More skate parks
Current Needs	Bring history alive in the parks
Current Needs	More "walking circuits" many Newporters like to stroll. Sidewalks are in terrible shape.
Current Needs	Move the farmer's market to spencer park
Current Needs	Ability to fund and implement effective, agile planning for all city responsibilities -- not just open space. Cannot have functional silos; what is the comprehensive plan?
Current Needs	Moratorium on building
Current Needs	Add mini parks at ends of streets abutting west side of Easton's Pond (Old Beach, Catherine, Champlin, Ellery) as community gardens?
Current Needs	City Tree Dept needs more money and staff
Current Needs	Sub-out maintenance
Current Needs	Rochambeau / monument walls need restoration -- move statue?
Current Needs	Connecting North End of Newport to waterfront access
Current Needs	Make parks attractive to young people and families
Current Needs	Food trucks and other activators of urban parks -- underutilized and "scary"
Current Needs	Community gardens
Current Needs	Permits for active use -- busking, food trucks, etc.
Current Needs	Promoting the tree giveaway program
Current Needs	Continue to clean water at King Park
Current Needs	Harbor Walk: make more inviting, enlarge / expand, build a boardwalk?
Current Needs	Lighting -- King Park walkway
Current Needs	Engage private property owners -- new Newport Yacht Center Owners -- for access
Current Needs	More play space in North End
Current Needs	Access to Hunter Park
Current Needs	Covered picnic area
Current Needs	Bus damage to trees especially around Rosecliff

Current Needs	Rejuvenate King Park with coastal / estuarial plants or park type activities (bocce / volleyball)
Current Needs	Tree Department: more money, more staff
Current Needs	Salt tolerant trees?
Current Needs	Improving current sidewalk
Current Needs	More bike-friendly spaces
Current Needs	Repair of King Park playground
Current Needs	Install signage at King Park
Current Needs	Funding increase Dept of Parks and Rec
Current Needs	More recreational space in North End
Current Needs	Better plan for resiliency, stormwater runoff, etc.
Current Needs	More plants to grow for = community gardens
Current Needs	Need to address open spaces in context of whole Aquidneck Island. Glen is an open space to Newporters.
Current Needs	How do island-wide sports leagues affect needs for fields, etc.?
Current Needs	Why can't we walk all around Easton's Pond? Water gardens?
Current Needs	Seating in urban parks like Liberty
Current Needs	Bike access along city streets
Current Needs	Amphitheatre / stage in some parks to activate (King's Park a success!)
Current Needs	Re-plant trees along Broadway
Current Needs	Allow ice cream trucks
Current Needs	Park access for North End community
Current Needs	Community gardens
Current Needs	Protected (conserved) land
Current Needs	Increase access public events on parks
Current Needs	More parks
Current Needs	Parks need more parking
Current Needs	Community Gardens
Current Needs	Island-wide resources
Current Needs	Green infrastructure
Current Needs	Finish Harbor Walk
Current Needs	Water access
Current Needs	Bridge realignment
Current Needs	Sidewalk -> complete streets
Current Needs	Skateboard park
Current Needs	Community garden - North End
Current Needs	Get rid of billboards!
Current Needs	Comprehensive plan
Current Needs	Replacement of trees that are dying of old age with planting of a mix of native species
Current Needs	Integrate wildlife habitat with public parks for migratory bird species
Current Needs	Connect Harbor Walk and provide play elements for visiting families a la Paris Sienne

Current Needs	More trees, trees, trees. Helps with rain absorption and stormwater runoff, also helps with beautification
Current Needs	J K Sullivan Square -- proposed commemorative location at the intersection of Green and Thames streets where J K Sullivan's initials marks the paved roadway "JKS / 1908" written in cobblestones. Need to design a park place where a tree now grows. Need a stone bench. And need signage indicating "JK Sullivan Square"
Future Resilient Network	Parks: increase basketball courts
Future Resilient Network	Get allocation from Navy to give use of land for multi-use park
Future Resilient Network	Combining sea-level rise requirements at Easton's beach with a complete re-do of the southeast entrance to Newport
Future Resilient Network	Power lines underground in all historic waterfront parts -- safer for storm surges / flooding etc., creates more space for trees to be planted
Future Resilient Network	Sea level rise will occur in areas of lower income families
Future Resilient Network	Insure that Newport retains or increases liveability for multiple income levels
Future Resilient Network	Create plan where living with water is celebrated
Future Resilient Network	Experiment with new landscape and architecture responsive to new conditions
Future Resilient Network	Planting resilient trees for wide tolerance of changing conditions (evergreen salt-tolerant magnolia grandiflora, for example)
Future Resilient Network	Increase number of play areas for kids in North End (i.e., basketball courts, park benches, tennis)
Future Resilient Network	Stormwater management planning on a citywide scale for maximum benefit. Parks and open spaces can be part of system
Future Resilient Network	When we lost the America's Cup, demand for "yachting" waterfront gave way to demand for a residential waterfront. Boatyards gave way to condos and public access to downtown waterfront was cut up, in many places lost. As we begin to "armor" our downtown waterfront against sea level rise and storm surge, there seems an opportunity to regain public area - - ideally, a continuous waterfront park!
Future Resilient Network	Tax credits for permeable paving of commercial lots (change definition of coverage)
Future Resilient Network	Acquire sites for pocket parks where there is a shortage
Future Resilient Network	Plan for water reservoir needs after sea level rise (+50 years at least)
Future Resilient Network	Green infrastructure + rooftop gardens + permeable pavement to help with stormwater runoff filtration and beautification
Future Resilient Network	Navy Hospital provides opp for the future and connect to open space or innovation hub?

Future Resilient Network	Slowing water, demonstrating green infrastructure, raising awareness of migratory, island-wide network not just Newport
Future Resilient Network	More open space is indeed necessary. The real question is how to get people to the open space and then where would they park
Future Resilient Network	Create more parks (mini and active) in North End
Future Resilient Network	With the increase in open spaces, how will the city infrastructure adapt to pay for creation, upkeep, and space to accommodate bikes, cars, and buses? Raising taxes will only continually push out the demographic with children and money away
Future Resilient Network	Better connectivity? Bike lanes + safety + awareness, public transportation year-round
Future Resilient Network	Green infrastructure – stop trying to grow grass
Future Resilient Network	Expand estuaries to buffer rising tides
Future Resilient Network	Water parks with break walls
Future Resilient Network	Increase number of trees for improved watershed maintenance
Future Resilient Network	Make Newport more like any European city or Charleston, SC where downtown is walking-only except for residents
Future Resilient Network	Storer Park land / water interface; water part unused
Future Resilient Network	Damage to parks from storms / SLR – buffer? Walls?
Future Resilient Network	Maintaining trees to reduce damage
Future Resilient Network	Hard and soft structures / barriers along coast to make areas more resilient against sea level rise and storm surge
Future Resilient Network	Less cars and trolley service, less parking lots downtown and instead underground parking
Future Resilient Network	For every tree that dies another should be planted
Future Resilient Network	Reclaim waterfront and open up parks and ensure resiliency / water views
Future Resilient Network	Look to New Orleans and other communities that have dealt with this problem (Netherlands)
Future Resilient Network	Small steps toward resiliency, simple solutions towards a huge issue
Future Resilient Network	Splash pads at Miantonomi (see -> Minneapolis / St. Louis Park, MN)
Future Resilient Network	Create public benefits when new development happens
Future Resilient Network	Convert abandoned schools owned by city to green space
Future Resilient Network	Model and map open space and connect the same way as Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket
Future Resilient Network	Make parks spaces people want to be, otherwise there's nothing to preserve! (or it won't get preserved if no one cares about the place, space, or its history)
Future Resilient Network	More attention to water run-off, green infrastructure elements in Storer and King Park
Future Resilient Network	Bury utilities to enhance resiliency after major flooding and

	storm damage
Future Resilient Network	Smart paving for proper drainage; permeable gutters, i.e., Belgian Block
Future Resilient Network	Close off Thames to cars during special times of the day and provide trolley service -- MORE walkable
Future Resilient Network	Maintain / replant trees that have reached life expectancy
Future Resilient Network	Community Gardens
Future Resilient Network	Rainwater management
Future Resilient Network	Education
Future Resilient Network	Sea and flood buffer zones
Future Resilient Network	Agile / flexible government for city -- need models for transportation alternatives
Future Resilient Network	Agua Parks / Sea level rise
Future Resilient Network	More pocket neighborhood parks
Future Resilient Network	Can some portion of Navy land (i.e., area where hospital is) be allocated for multi-use park?
Future Resilient Network	More beach grass would help absorb flooding ocean waters / beach grass, not mowed, around reservoir by Easton's Beach
Future Resilient Network	Sea level rise will impact adequate level of parks. The city is largely developed; it will be difficult to reduce gap between need and supply.
Future Resilient Network	Add at least 1 or 2 more dog parks
Future Resilient Network	Add basketball and hand ball parks behind Broadway
Future Resilient Network	Add basketball court to Easton's Beach
Future Resilient Network	Increase number of basketball courts in North End
Future Resilient Network	Increase number of park benches in North End and Cliff Walk area
Future Resilient Network	Pick out the right vegetation
Future Resilient Network	Apple tree orchard off Ft. Adams behind John Adams statue
Future Resilient Network	Consider access to other open space and recreational aspects on the island, especially Middletown', beaches, bird sanctuary, and Portsmouth's Glen
Future Resilient Network	Sea grass / wild flowers around Easton's Pond will keep geese pollution away
Future Resilient Network	Visionary possibilities
Future Resilient Network	More space for community people in North End to enjoy outdoors
Future Resilient Network	Rain barrels at downspouts of buildings
Future Resilient Network	URI Department of Landscape Architecture Senior Capstone project was introduced by Friends of Waterfront
Future Resilient Network	Need for stormwater control in all areas and for future flood control in all areas (especially King Park / Spencer Park / Wellington Ave areas)
Future Resilient Network	Complete the Harbor Walk / install board walk
Future Resilient Network	Lighting the King Park walk for community usage

Future Resilient Network	Install nature area where grass is dead
Future Resilient Network	Educate public about consequences of global warming and need for immediate action
Future Resilient Network	Visionary possibilities
Future Resilient Network	City and leadership visionary leaders
Future Resilient Network	Naval Hospital property??
Future Resilient Network	Bike path around Ocean Drive
Future Resilient Network	Tax incentives for non-asphalt surfaces
Future Resilient Network	Community gardens
Future Resilient Network	Bike path on Bellevue Avenue
Future Resilient Network	Spencer Park -- revert to canal-like spot to allow flood / water
Future Resilient Network	King Park -- no grass area, don't fight it -- Bocce court, or volleyball?
Future Resilient Network	Look at other areas -- Netherlands and how they have adapted
Future Resilient Network	Clinton and Narragansett -- bridge instead of road
Future Resilient Network	Complete the Harbor Walk!
Future Resilient Network	More street trees in sidewalks
Future Resilient Network	Green infrastructure and park planning along coastlines for climate change / SLR mitigation
Future Resilient Network	Tree planting / planning
Future Resilient Network	Smart development
Future Resilient Network	Greenways of connectivity
Future Resilient Network	Increase walkability / habitat corridors
Future Resilient Network	Trains?
Future Resilient Network	All new projects should integrate stormwater management and retainage techniques
Future Resilient Network	Need resilient transportation system
Future Resilient Network	Children swimming opportunities (beaches aren't enough)
Future Resilient Network	Birds -- more habitable environments in the parks (migratory birds -- habitable foods and native plants)
Future Resilient Network	How to replace trees which are dying: global warming, what species want to encourage, trees need private (encourage planting of trees by private property), watch for give away
Future Resilient Network	Not enough activities for kids in park
Future Resilient Network	Connectivity is important -- little play activities along the harbor walk (balance beams, walls, etc. -- shower park water jets)
Future Resilient Network	More play and exercise opportunities in the North End (sites aimed at different age groups)

