

Transportation to Livable Communities Cultural Planning Report



*Final Report by Craig Dreeszen, Ph.D., Dreeszen & Associates,
November 14, 2012*

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Transportation to Livable Communities Final Cultural Planning Report

Introduction

This initiative integrates art, culture, and heritage into Providence's urban transportation, community and economic development planning. Cultural planners identified local cultural resources, engaged neighborhood stakeholders in defining distinct attributes of each corridor, and developed strategies to apply cultural solutions that help define places, animate neighborhood hubs, mitigate problems, and inspire creative economic development. This cross-sector partnership among planning, transportation, and arts agencies is innovative enough that the planners intend to share methods and results at regional and national arts and economic development conferences.

Objectives

Dreeszen & Associates worked with the City of Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism and the Department of Planning and Development "to complete three main tasks: (1) document existing arts and cultural opportunities along each of the five project corridors of North Main Street, Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Manton Avenue, and Chalkstone Avenue; (2) develop interpretive "themes" for each of the five study corridors that will reflect and reinforce each corridor's design and unique cultural heritage, providing a sense of orientation that connects people and places along the corridor in a meaningful way; and (3) develop strategies to integrate arts and culture, housing and job opportunities at key nodes along the five study corridors. This project is part of the Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities planning project, funded through a Community Planning Challenge Grant awarded through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities¹."

Methods

Cultural planning proceeded in three phases from June to November 2012 led by Dreeszen & Associates director, Craig Dreeszen with Tom Borrup, Creative Community Builders; Stephanie Fortunato and Lynne McCormack, Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism; and research assistants from Brown University's Master's Program in Public Humanities: Rachael Jeffers, Anna Links, and Adrienne Marshall.

Phase I Cultural Resource Inventory To compile the cultural resource inventory, researchers searched directories, databases, and event calendars to identify and map cultural resources. Directories, databases, and event calendars including the RIEDC Business Database, New England Foundation for the Arts' Culture Count and Matchbook, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, and Arts Culture + Tourism have been combed in order to identify and map cultural resources along the five project corridors of North Main Street, Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Chalkstone Avenue, and Manton Avenue. An online survey and interviews with stakeholders, focus groups, community leaders, and experts from various

¹ Contract, 22 May, 2012, between Providence Department of Planning & Development and the Consultant

fields have also informed the process. The cultural and creative sectors have been broadly defined using standard definitions developed by the New England Foundation for the Arts.

Phase II Corridor Interpretive Themes The planners met with six stakeholder committees and project advisors, interviewed experts, surveyed stakeholders, convened public meetings to gather recommendations about each corridor's cultural assets and distinct characteristics. The planning team analyzed the cultural inventory and resource maps, toured the five transit corridors and worked with the to develop draft themes. Tentative themes were shared with stakeholder and advisory committees for feedback before refining.

Phase III Planning The planning team met with City of Providence Art Culture + Tourism and Planning and Development staff, project advisors, and stakeholder committees to develop strategies to employ arts, culture, and heritage to improve livability, prosperity, and public access to arts and entertainment along the five corridors. Recommendations also built upon Creative Providence: A cultural plan for the creative sector; Providence Tomorrow neighborhood plans; and other plans including: an Urban Land Institute study, the RIPTA Metro Transit Study, and specific district plans. Recommendations are based on assets identified in inventories of cultural resources and the interpretive themes and artist guidelines for each corridor.

Abstract of Interpretive Themes and Artist Guidelines

NORTH MAIN STREET: LIVING WITH HISTORY North Main Street is most distinctive for its rich layers of history. Residents live amidst this history and RIPTA patrons ride through the corridor's invisible heritage, perhaps unaware of the importance of this route to the city, state, and nation. Artists and designers are called to create tangible reminders of important elements of history that are no longer apparent. As Paul Klee observed, "art does not reproduce the visible, it makes visible." Artists will help create a sense of place along the corridor and help the people who use North Main Street today recall and appreciate the cultural landscape. From its early Native American, colonial, and Revolutionary War history and the inclusive philosophy of the North Burial Ground, to a thriving African American music scene and the early 20th century sports clubs, artists may propose to manifest some piece of history or discover connections between them.

BROAD STREET: EXPERIENCING WORLD CULTURES Broad Street is most notable for its international character, especially its distinctive concentration of international markets, world foods (restaurants, food trucks, and bodegas), and festivals. Artists and designers will interpret the diverse ethnic character of Broad Street, drawing inspiration from the vibrant commercial center with active street life and sidewalks, filled with entertainment, food, social life, colorful murals, and small businesses operated by local, mostly Latino and Asian entrepreneurs. Broad Street's visual and human dynamism provide artists ample opportunities to be part of and contribute to an already lively environment.

ELMWOOD AVENUE: GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY Elmwood Avenue's most distinctive features are its origins as an elm tree-lined trolley suburb and its contemporary pathway to the "American Dream" for many new immigrants. The challenge for artists and designers is to visualize Elmwood Avenue's role in people's aspirations for a better life -- rooted in its history as the City's first suburb and its role today as a welcome gateway for new citizens. Artists may find opportunities to recognize the role of public transit, and increased mobility, in the founding of the neighborhood and as a path to opportunity.

CHALKSTONE AVENUE: HONORING PROVIDENCE'S WORKERS Chalkstone Avenue is distinguished by its working people, founded with worker's housing and a trolley to accommodate the workforce for Providence's 19th century factories and mills. The corridor's theme may inspire oral histories, portraits, and public art that recognize the neighborhood's workers, veterans, heroes and the families of Chalkstone Avenue. Artist-led projects that involve and connect neighbors may inspire a stronger sense of community cohesion bringing people together to exchange new ideas and fostering vitality.

MANTON AVENUE: CREATIVE ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE Manton Avenue was shaped by, and still follows the Woonasquatucket River, which provided water energy for the industrial-age mills on the corridor. Today, a renewed creative energy powers the Avenue's revitalization and industrial structures provide homes for them. Artists may tap ways the corridor's creative energy builds upon its industrial heritage, the river, and waves of immigrants. Its resources suggest continuity as a creative metaphor – flowing river, evolving entrepreneurs, and changing population. Artists should note that residents value both the route's industrial aesthetic and its natural environment.

Other important resources for artists This is a much-condensed abstract. Artists and designers should study the full report of interpretive themes with detailed explanations of each corridor's interpretive theme. The report points to iconic images and suggestions of cultural attractions or places that matter with potential for way-finding and bus stop identification. A catalog of cultural resources for each corridor can suggest opportunities for artists to engage with creative businesses, local cultural organizations, schools, businesses, religious institutions, and social service agencies.

Corridor theme objectives and methods Dreeszen & Associates' cultural planning team worked closely with the City's Department of Planning and Development, Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, and five Stakeholder Groups to develop interpretive themes for each of the five study corridors. The interpretive themes have a placemaking objective; they will contribute to a cohesive visual identity for each of the corridors and may be expressed through artistic treatments, streetscape enhancements, pedestrian amenities, public art projects, way-finding signage, bus stop identification gateways, and other elements. These theme guidelines will be sent to artists and designers along with a call for art. Interpretive themes will inform creative work so that designs relate to the distinct character of each place and echo what residents say they value about their communities. Neighborhood, business, and environmental associations may use the themes in branding and communications to reinforce a cohesive sense of community. The full corridor themes report is appended to this report.

Cultural Resources Inventory Summary

Inventory methods Dreeszen & Associates' researchers searched directories, databases, and event calendars to identify and map cultural resources. Directories, databases, and event calendars including the RIEDC Business Database, New England Foundation for the Arts' Culture Count and Matchbook, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, and Arts Culture + Tourism have been combed in order to identify and map cultural resources along the five project corridors of North Main Street, Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Chalkstone Avenue, and Manton Avenue. An online survey and interviews with stakeholders, focus groups, community leaders, and experts from various fields have also informed the process.

Creative and cultural sectors defined The cultural and creative sectors have been broadly defined using definitions developed by the New England Foundation for the Arts. These include resources ranging

from arts and cultural organizations, public art, historic buildings and sites, creative industries, artists, parks, cemeteries, schools, local restaurants and food markets, community gardens, schools, religious institutions, and service organizations. Inventory categories are determined by standardized NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) and NTEE (National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities) core codes.

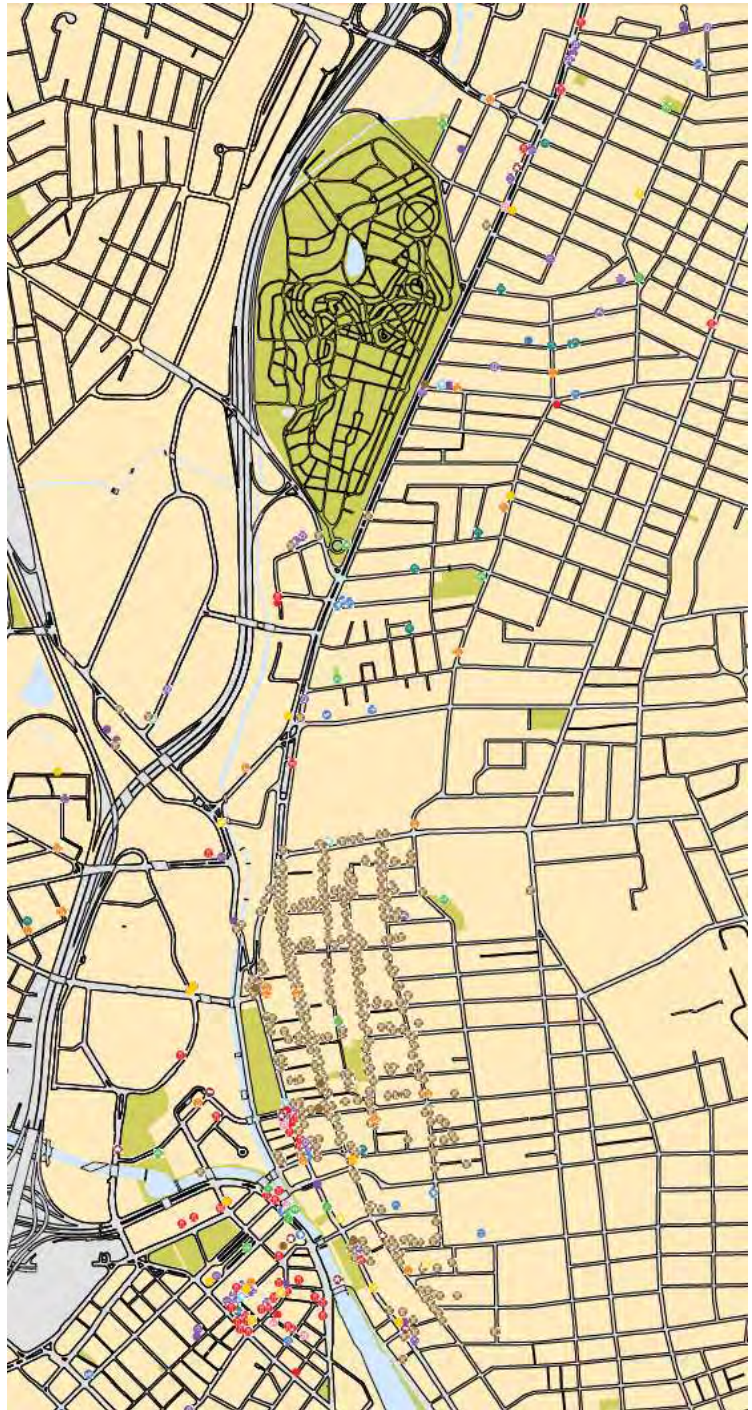
Stakeholder and advisor input Stakeholders and advisor input helped define and refine themes.

Why this matters Cultural and creative institutions and sites enhance a shared sense that a place is special. Identifying cultural resources has been our first step to identify distinctive themes for each corridor. Then, these will help us develop creative placemaking strategies that have potential to help define transportation gateways and revitalize critical hubs.

Database and maps The inventory of cultural resources along the five corridors is presented here in summary. The cultural resources are also reported with much more data in a database and plotted on maps (small scale maps are bound into this report). Contact the Providence Department of Planning and Development for more information.

North Main Street

The cultural inventory for North Main Street includes 715 cultural resources. As acknowledged by the corridor's theme, "Living with History", historic buildings, sites, and districts represent the primary cultural resource. There are 528 historic buildings and sites, eight historic service organizations, and four historic districts. The North Burial Ground and the Roger Williams National Memorial are the most significant historic sites. Other historic sites include the Armory, Liberty Tree, and Dexter House. There is a significant cluster of creative industries. These include a cluster of 17 news media organizations, 12 photography/videography/design companies, nine architects or designers, nine arts galleries or dealers, and three



North Main Street Cultural Resources Brown icons mark historic buildings

music stores. The corridor's downtown district contains a significant cluster of restaurants and overall there are 54 restaurants and six identified live entertainment venues along the route. Sixteen parks and open public spaces help define the corridor. The Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) is a significant presence. There are significant number of artists living along the corridor. However, they are underrepresented in the data and their numbers are not reported for Main Street or the other corridors.

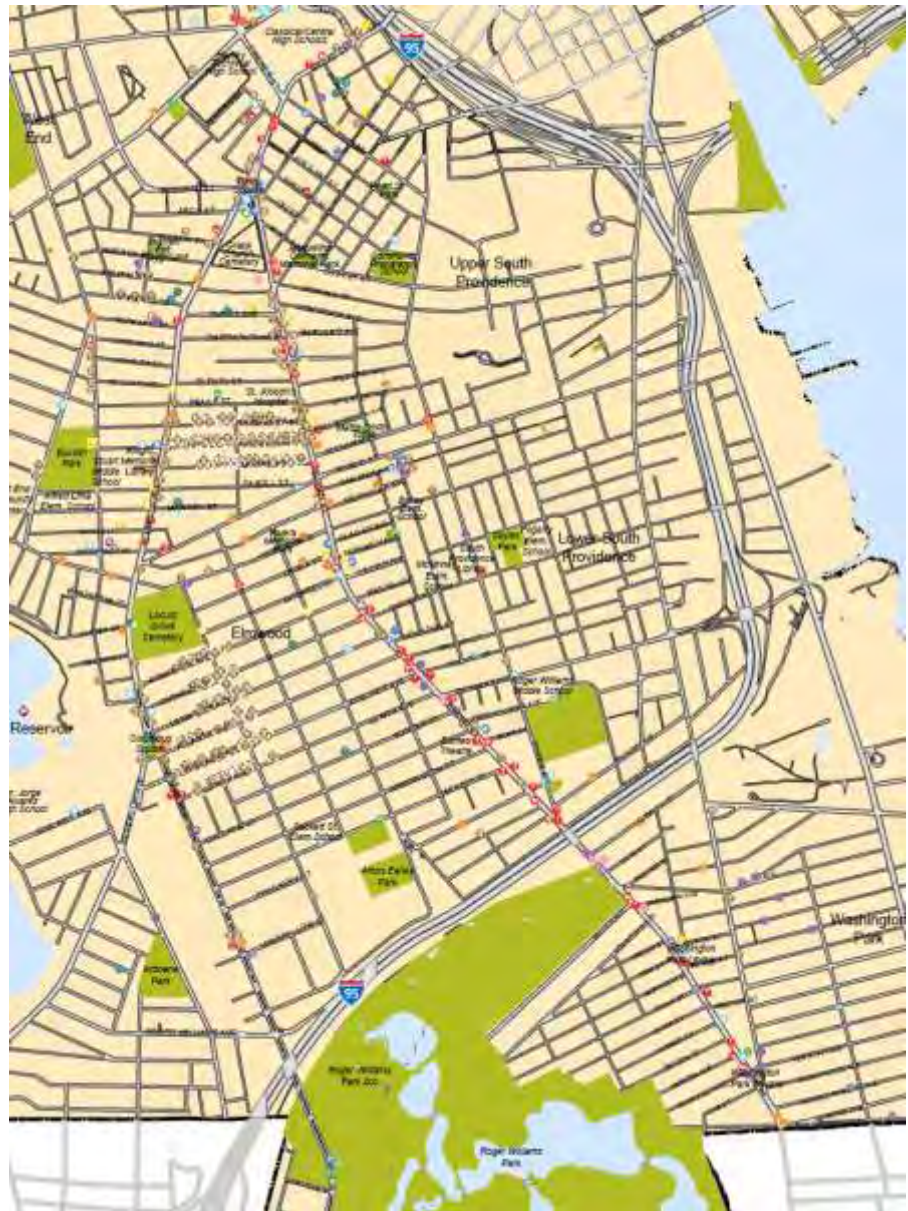
Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue

Since Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue corridors overlap, the two routes' inventories are combined. The catalogue records 667 cultural resources in the two corridors. Creative industries are the primary cultural resource for each corridor. Broad Street is best known for its international restaurants, markets, and festivals. The Broad Street theme accordingly, is "Exploring International Cultures." The Broad Street Merchants' Association has branded the district, "International Marketplace."

Elmwood is also known for international foods and its diverse population, but its history as an elm-lined trolley suburb suggested its theme of "Gateway to Opportunity." There are designated 344 historic buildings along the two corridors.

Between the two corridors, there are 36 local restaurants, mostly international in flavor. There are also 23 local food

markets. Many food trucks gather each evening along Broad Street. While there are just five live entertainment venues, Broad Street is known for its night life. The annual Dominican Festival and Puerto Rican parade are important celebrations of the community's international heritage.



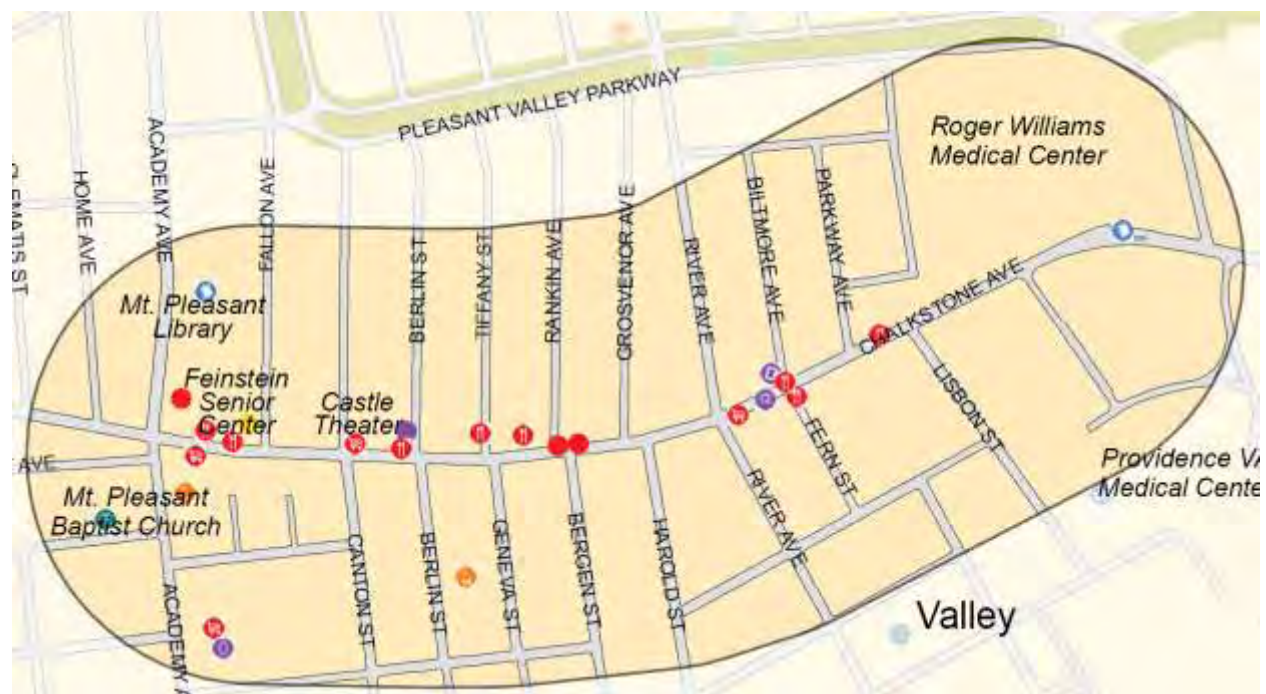
Broad Street & Elmwood Avenue Cultural Resources

There is a significant cluster of 24 jewelry manufacturers and stores along the two corridors. There are 17 parks and open public spaces along the routes. Both Broad and Elmwood are the routes to Roger Williams Park, the City's major cultural attraction, with open spaces, performance events, public art, zoo, botanical gardens, and historic museum.

There are 29 schools along the corridor and a small, but important youth arts cluster of cultural institutions near Trinity Square and along Elmwood Avenue. Thirty religious organizations serve the communities. Forty health, human service, and cultural service organizations operate along the corridors. Several provide services for new immigrants, contributing to the Elmwood theme, "Gateway to Opportunity."

Chalkstone Avenue

The cultural inventory catalogued 145 cultural resources along Chalkstone Avenue. Twenty seven local restaurants represent the most significant cluster of creative businesses. While most restaurants serve local needs, one is the Trip Advisors' most highly rated restaurant by visitors to Providence. There are 11 local markets, 24 historic buildings, and 18 churches. Residents cite their open spaces which include David Park, Triggs Memorial Golf Course, and the Pleasant Valley Parkway among the 12 open spaces. The western end of the corridor abuts the Woonasquattuck River and its greenway and bike path. Chalkstone's most significant cultural resource however, may be its population, the City's historical and contemporary work force. Chalkstone was established to house workers for the City's 19th century factories and mills. The neighborhood still is predominantly working class. Two major hospitals are a dominant contemporary feature.



Details of Chalkstone Avenue Hub

Manton Avenue

There were 170 cultural resources identified in the Manton Avenue inventory. There is a significant contribution of creative businesses, including restaurants, jewelry manufacturers, and artists. There are 23 restaurants, including the iconic New York System. There is a significant cluster of 16 jewelry, glass and metals, stores, supplies, and manufacturing businesses. There are 48 historic buildings including Atlantic Mills, several factory-to-loft conversions, and many former factory or mill buildings. There are eleven religious organizations including two large Haitian churches. The corridor was defined by the Woonasquatucket River and this remains a major resource as a natural feature, greenway, and bike path. The river, the historic source of power and the obvious industrial heritage, generated the corridor theme, "Creative Energy and Industrial Heritage."



Manton and Chalkstone Avenue Resources

Creative Community Development and Placemaking Strategies

The City of Providence commissioned Dreeszen & Associates to recommend strategies to encourage creative economic development, opportunities for cultural participation, and creative placemaking initiatives for five high-volume transportation corridors in Providence. These are: North Main Street, Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Chalkstone Avenue, and Manton Avenue. The planning team met with stakeholder and advisor committees, toured the five transit corridors, and worked with the City of Providence Art Culture + Tourism and Planning and Development staff to develop strategies to employ arts, culture, and heritage to improve livability, prosperity, and public access to arts and entertainment along the five corridors. These recommendations build upon inventories of cultural resources, interpretive themes, and artist guidelines developed as part of the planning for each corridor.

These strategies will enhance Creative Providence: A cultural plan for the creative sector (2009), especially: “Build community and foster neighborhood vitality through increased access and diversified cultural participation;” “Invest in neighborhood art, culture, and creativity to sustain social diversity and engage communities;” and “Create conditions for creative workers to thrive in Providence.”

The plan recommends ten overall strategic options, which are also recommended as enduring public policies that may guide future plans and initiatives. Each broad strategic option frames more specific action steps. Four clusters of high-priority actions are identified. Plans are organized by corridor and key hubs identified by the Department of Planning and Development. Some actions may be applied to any of the corridors. For each recommended action in the full report, the planners have noted its timing and status, the primary cultural resources that may be employed, potential lead agency and partners, funding and cost implications where these are known, and suggested priority. Four clusters of high-priority actions are identified.

For detailed recommendations, please see the full report: “Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities: Creative Community Development and Placemaking Strategies.”

Strategic Options and Policy Recommendations

The following is a summary of overall classes of recommended strategies (Strategic Options, numbered SO1, SO2, etc. in recommendations). City planners, developers, neighborhood and business associations, and nonprofit organizations may think of these as a set of tools that may be adapted flexibly to specific hubs, gateways, and corridors to apply arts, heritage, and cultural resources to encourage livable, prosperous communities. An initiative may employ multiple strategic options.

- SO1. **Emerging initiatives** – Encourage existing or emerging initiatives or plans underway. This strategy is a high priority, as emerging initiatives have the advantage of local leadership, investment, and momentum.
- SO2. **Creative economic development** – Create jobs and business-and enhance capacity of nonprofit cultural organizations and creative businesses.
- SO3. **Animation** – Support programs or special events that enliven places, demonstrate viability of underused spaces, and create opportunities to participate in creative, community life.
- SO4. **Mitigation** – Reduce eyesores or hazards with artistic treatments, e.g. temporary murals or creative fencing.
- SO5. **Public art** – Install permanent or temporary art in public places that celebrate and help define communities.
- SO6. **Way-finding/placemaking** – Create signs, directories, and interpretative aids that help define places and help people navigate and appreciate their community.
- SO7. **Communications** – Market and promote to inform and attract people to cultural attractions and programs.
- SO8. **Regulations** – Amend or streamline zoning, ordinances, or permitting processes to advance opportunities for cultural participation and creative economic development.
- SO9. **Community Capacity Building** – Foster cross-cultural neighborhood-based organizing to bridge groups and strengthen capacity of neighborhood associations, businesses, and nonprofits to manage and grow local activity and development.
- SO10. **Facilities** – Support planning, financing, and development of key community gathering places and cultural facilities.

Goals for Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities Initiative

This Creative Community Development and Placemaking Plan furthers two goals of the Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities project:

Goal 3 Encourage community hubs

Goal 4 Improve access to arts and cultural opportunities

An additional long-range goal is implied by the strategies emerging from the planning:

New Goal Develop creative economic opportunities

How to use this plan

The following plan recommends ten overall strategic options, which are also recommended as enduring public policies that may guide future plans and initiatives. Each broad strategic option frames more specific action steps. Four clusters of high-priority actions are identified. Plans are organized by corridor and key hubs identified by the Department of Planning and Development. Some actions may be applied to any of the corridors. For each recommended action, the planners have noted its timing and status, the primary cultural resources that may be employed, potential lead agency and partners, funding and cost implications where these are known, and suggested priority.

Recommended action steps are ranked by priority, using the following categories:

1. **High priority/high feasibility** – high impact initiative underway or funding likely to implement within next three years
2. **High priority/needs significant new investment** -- potential impact high, but needs resources
3. **Moderate priority** -- moderate impact or needs significant time (3-5 years) to build capacity or secure resources
4. **Opportunity watch** – Be alert for timely opportunity to encourage or implement a strategy by identifying a community champion (e.g. encourage developer or community group to take initiative)

Highest priority strategies and actions

This plan documents ten overall strategic options and policies and scores of specific actions called for by citizens or recommended by experts. Mindful of City capacity, the planners identified the four highest priorities. Many creative community development and placemaking initiatives that advance the City's goals are already planned or underway by developers, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies -- these are the highest priority. Other priority recommendations include creating two small grant programs, implementing Transportation Corridor cultural plans, and organizing quick, low-cost projects.

1. **Encourage emerging or existing initiatives that advance City goals.** Fortunately many plans and projects are underway or pending that would help achieve the City's goals to encourage active community hubs, create jobs, and improve access to arts and cultural opportunities. The City and its partners should actively support such projects, help those with initiative to navigate permitting procedures, help connect with grants and capital, and minimize regulatory barriers. The cultural assessment identified the following specific initiatives along the five corridors (with reference to strategy and action items in this plan): Action steps 1.4 cultural programming in hubs, 4.1.a Kennedy Plaza re-development, 5.1.a.-5.1.h. Southside Cultural Center, 5.2 Community Music Works expansion, and 7.1 Broad Street Synagogue redevelopment.
2. **Create two small grants programs to encourage citizen initiatives that further City goals and enhance community cohesion.** Specifically, the plan recommends implementing a Neighborhood Improvement Grant program (action 1.1) and a new Calls to Producer grant program (1.2) on the five project corridors. Such programs could steer small municipal investments into communities that participated in the Transportation Corridors planning project but where implementation funds have not yet been identified.
3. **Implement the Commercial Corridor Art & Amenities Program plans to issue design RFQs, commission public art.** Invest funding from the City CDBG program and RIPTA's transit enhancements to implement these projects on North Main Street and Broad Street. Identify additional funding sources to

implement plans on Elmwood, Manton, and Chalkstone Avenues. Develop complementary plans for wayfinding and information systems. Specific actions include: 1.9 expand downtown way-finding system throughout corridors, 1.12 create information signs, kiosks, and 1.3 interactive way-finding and information systems, 5.4 and 9.1 public art in Trinity Square and Roger Williams Park's Elmwood gateway.

4. Organize quick, low-cost mitigation and animation projects to engage artists and community members and demonstrate City responsiveness to opportunities and problems identified in the planning. Implementation of the two small grants programs identified above could achieve this. The plan also recommends mitigation strategies to address specific challenges along corridors: 2.3 commission temporary murals and creative fences, 4.5 encourage North Main Street merchants' walkability initiatives, 5.4 renew pressure on Grace Church to maintain their cemetery (new fence could be public art project), and 6.1 make temporary Bomes Theatre façade improvements. Animate hubs as recommended in actions: 1.6 steer programming to hubs, 2.1a.-2.1b. recruit cultural institutions to northern North Main hub, 2.2 direct walkers to North Burial Ground paths, 2.5 encourage independent muralists, 5.1.b. Trinity Square programming, 6.4 help sustain Broad Street festivals, 8.1 encourage Columbus Square programming, and 12.2 add amenities and events at under-used spaces.

Zoning Recommendations

These recommendations on zoning and permitting are intended to inform the City's Phase II planning to revise Providence Zoning. As the scope of the cultural planning along the corridors was broad, and hub build-out scenarios are pending, these recommendations are general.

1. Zoning regulations should be nuanced enough to permit cultural and creative uses that advance City goals.
 - a. Zoning should permit artist and creative worker live/work spaces even in job-alone districts. This is especially important for second-floor spaces above retail businesses and in industrial areas where artist housing would create, not inhibit jobs. Some cities like Peekskill New York have established model procedures to confirm legitimate artist applicants for such housing to prevent abuse of the permits^[1]. See actions 1.5 defining artist jobs, and 11.3 Olneyville jobs-only zoning.
 - b. Zoning and permitting for live music performances must be nuanced to allow non-intrusive live music that enhances the viability of businesses and neighborhoods. Regulations should distinguish between the enhanced ambiance of a guitarist at a restaurant and a band or DJ attracting boisterous late-night crowds to a neighborhood bar. See actions 1.6 and 1.7 hub animation, 1.9.a, b, and c for live music permitting and 2.1 and 2.1.a recruit attractions to North Main hub.
 - c. Existing City regulations for busking are adequate to allow street performers and limit nuisances.
2. Review zoning of corridor hubs and gateways for any restrictions that could limit location of a cultural organization that could attract students or present live performances. See actions 1.9.a, b,

^[1] Peekskill NY, Artist Live/Work district Resource Guide, retrieved August 31, 2011 from http://www.cityofpeekskill.com/sites/default/files/artist_live_work_district_resource_guide_3.31.11.pdf

for live music permitting.

3. Review zoning recommendations that have not yet been implanted as part of the *Providence Tomorrow* neighborhood plans especially: Amend zoning designation of vacant parcels adjacent to the Stop & Shop plaza from C4 to C2 to facilitate the development of a traditional urban village²; Increase opportunities and access to safe and affordable housing for artists; and Examine ways in which live/work could be adjusted to meet the expanded needs of artists³. See action 10.2 Manton hub zoning. A list of Providence Tomorrow zoning recommendations with potential implications for cultural and creative development along the corridors is appended to this report.
4. Consider flexible zoning tools that encourage cultural and creative development. While Planning and Development staffs are familiar with these tools, it may be useful to reinforce their utility to implement these recommendations. Form-based zoning allows the City to influence the shape and aesthetics of districts while permitting multiple uses. Arts overlay zones (See Somerville ordinance⁴) permit creative uses within districts that might otherwise limit such use. Historic districts protect the integrity of historic neighborhoods. Enterprise zones encourage creative economic development in designated districts through tax incentives⁵.
5. Create a cultural and creative subcommittee to advise the City on creative placemaking, entertainment, and cultural and creative economic development during the Phase II zoning review. See 1.5 define artist jobs, 1.10 appoint subcommittee and 1.11 creative enterprise districts.

² Providence Tomorrow, Hartford, Silver Lake, and Manton Neighborhood Plan, January 2010

³ Providence Tomorrow, Olneyville, Valley and Smith Hill Neighborhood Plan, August 2009

⁴

http://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USQRezoningOrdinancewithMapsAsAmended%20adopted%20and%20ordained_%204-23-091.pdf

⁵ <http://www.riedc.com/business-services/business-incentives/state-enterprise-zones>

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Interpretive Themes and Artist Guidelines

Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities

Dreeszen & Associates

Theme Abstracts

NORTH MAIN STREET: LIVING WITH HISTORY North Main Street is most distinctive for its rich layers of history. Residents live amidst this history and RIPTA patrons ride through the corridor's invisible heritage, perhaps unaware of the importance of this route to the city, state, and nation. Artists and designers are called to create tangible reminders of important elements of history that are no longer apparent. As Paul Klee observed, "art does not reproduce the visible, it makes visible." Artists will help create a sense of place along the corridor and help the people who use North Main Street today recall and appreciate the cultural landscape. From its early Native American, colonial, and Revolutionary War history and the inclusive philosophy of the North Burial Ground, to a thriving African American music scene and the early 20th century sports clubs, artists may propose to manifest some piece of history or discover connections between them.

BROAD STREET: EXPERIENCING WORLD CULTURES Broad Street is most notable for its international character, especially its distinctive concentration of international markets, world foods (restaurants, food trucks, and bodegas), and festivals. Artists and designers will interpret the diverse ethnic character of Broad Street, drawing inspiration from the vibrant commercial center with active street life and sidewalks, filled with entertainment, food, social life, colorful murals, and small businesses operated by local, mostly Latino and Asian entrepreneurs. Broad Street's visual and human dynamism provide artists ample opportunities to be part of and contribute to an already lively environment.

ELMWOOD AVENUE: GATEWAY TO OPPORTUNITY Elmwood Avenue's most distinctive features are its origins as an elm tree-lined trolley suburb and its contemporary pathway to the "American Dream" for many new immigrants. The challenge for artists and designers is to visualize Elmwood Avenue's role in people's aspirations for a better life -- rooted in its history as the City's first suburb and its role today as a welcome gateway for new citizens. Artists may find opportunities to recognize the role of public transit, and increased mobility, in the founding of the neighborhood and as a path to opportunity.

CHALKSTONE AVENUE: HONORING PROVIDENCE'S WORKERS Chalkstone Avenue is distinguished by its working people, founded with worker's housing and a trolley to accommodate the workforce for Providence's 19th century factories and mills. The corridor's theme may inspire oral histories, portraits, and public art that recognize the neighborhood's workers, veterans, heroes and the families of Chalkstone Avenue. Artist-led projects that involve and connect neighbors may inspire a stronger sense of community cohesion bringing people together to exchange new ideas and fostering vitality.

MANTON AVENUE: CREATIVE ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE Manton Avenue was shaped by, and still follows the Woonasquatucket River, which provided water energy for the industrial-age mills on the corridor. Today, a renewed creative energy powers the Avenue's revitalization and industrial structures provide homes for them. Artists may tap ways the corridor's creative energy builds upon its industrial heritage, the river, and waves of immigrants. Its resources suggest continuity as a creative metaphor – flowing river, evolving entrepreneurs, and changing population. Artists should note that residents value both the route's industrial aesthetic and its natural environment.

Objectives and Methods

Outcomes Dreeszen & Associates' cultural planning team worked closely with the City's Department of Planning and Development, Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, and five Stakeholder Groups to develop interpretive themes for each of the five study corridors: North Main Street, Broad Street, Elmwood Avenue, Manton Avenue, and Chalkstone Avenue. Themes reflect and reinforce each corridor's design and unique cultural heritage, providing a sense of orientation that connects people and places along the corridor in a meaningful way.

Application of the themes The themes have a placemaking objective; they will contribute to a cohesive visual identity for each of the corridors and may be expressed through artistic treatments, streetscape enhancements, pedestrian amenities, public art projects, way-finding signage, bus stop identification gateways, and other elements. These theme guidelines will be sent to artists and designers along with Requests for Qualifications and Proposals to interpret the themes. Interpretive themes will inform creative work so that designs relate to the distinct character of each place and echo what residents say they value about their communities. Neighborhood, business, and environmental associations may use the themes in branding and communications to reinforce a cohesive sense of community.

Methods City staff and the consulting team met twice with each Stakeholder Group and with the overall Project Advisory committee as well as with community members at public meetings to gather suggestions and to test emerging theme concepts. Three hundred and twenty (320) stakeholders responded to surveys asking for distinctive characteristics, special places, events, stories, and people along each corridor. The consultant team also interviewed experts, reviewed neighborhood plans, analyzed patterns in the cultural resources inventory for each corridor, toured the corridors, and photographed iconic places.

North Main Street -- Living with History

Layers of history North Main Street is most distinctive for its rich layers of history. Residents live amidst this rich history andRIPTA patrons ride through the corridor's heritage, perhaps unaware of the importance of this route to Providence, Rhode Island, and the nation. While bus riders and drivers zip along a busy, multi-lane artery, they follow an historic Native American footpath through four historic districts shaped by forces that defined Providence. North Main Stakeholders speak often of "what used to be" along their corridor.

Artist guidelines Artists and designers who interpret North Main Streets' *Living with History* theme are called to create tangible reminders of important elements of this history that are no longer apparent. Artists will help create a sense of place along the corridor and help residents and commuters recall and appreciate that they pass by hallowed ground. There is much more to North Main Street than is obvious.

Through public art and design commissions, artists may find metaphors and inspiration from the invisible layers of North Main's history, its people, events, and important places. A corridor dominated by vehicles, contemporary urban form, and under-utilized properties, reveals little of the street's storied past to the general passer-by. As residents talk about "what used to be here," artists can help us see beneath the surface, to experience the invisible, or connect history with the future. Artists may draw upon a multi-layered palette. From its early Native American, colonial, and Revolutionary War history and the inclusive philosophy of the North Burial Ground, to a thriving African American music scene and the early 20th century sports clubs, artists may propose to manifest some piece of history or to discover connections between them. An artist may find a way to connect or contrast historical threads to weave a welcoming place to live, to work or shop, to walk or play, to visit, or to simply pass through.

Early history North Main Street aligns roughly with the Pawtucket trail, home to the Narragansett people who welcomed the exiled Roger Williams. Williams founded Providence in 1636 at a spring near Narragansett Bay, along Towne Street, now North Main Street. He built his house across the street⁶ from the present-day site of the Roger Williams National Memorial⁷. Providence grew from this founding settlement inspired by principles of independent thinking, tolerance, and civic government, the first American colony separating church from state.



Figure 1A nineteenth-century map of the home lots of Providence Plantations in 1646. The map shows Towne Street (today's North Main Street) with a spring on its west side across from Roger Williams's home lot.

⁶ Map Detail, A. L. Boswell map in from Charles Hopkins, *The Home Lots of the Early Settlers of the Providence Plantations, with Notes and Plats*, 1886, annotated by SUNY ESF.

⁷ Cultural Landscape Report for Roger Williams National Memorial, Providence, Rhode Island, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and National Park Service, Boston, Massachusetts 2010
<http://www.nps.gov/rowi/parkmgmt/upload/2011-03-22-10-29-5>

Military history Rochambeau Avenue and Rochambeau Square recall the French Revolutionary War hero, whose troops encamped along the corridor before joining Washington's army for the decisive Siege of Yorktown. Civil War troops also mustered along the route. The Providence Armory is a contemporary reminder of North Main Street's significant military history.

Historic buildings Among the many historic buildings standing along the corridor are: King's Chapel (St. John's Episcopal), 1722; First Baptist Church, 1726; Colony House (State House), 1731; and Jeremiah Dexter House (shown here).



Dexter House and Preserve Rhode Island



North Burial Ground

North Burial Ground The North Burial Ground, occupies a large area along the northwestern flank of the corridor and is the most frequently cited cultural resource. It is an historic and egalitarian cemetery where governors, philanthropists, college presidents, war heroes, sports icons, the poor, and slaves are buried. The Burial Ground is a microcosm of Providence and Rhode Island history and Roger Williams' legacy of inclusion. Inside the Burial Ground are the Brown Chapel, Armenian Holocaust Memorial, Providence Firefighters Memorial, and a memorial to Rochambeau and the French in the

Revolution. Historians have documented the

historic tombstones with a database of images. Two interactive tours of the Burial Ground are in development. While we have not heard much evidence that the cemetery attracts much cultural tourism or significant recreational use, there is potential for more. Randall Park is an under-used linear park that buffers burial sites from North Main Street. Collyer Park is a popular amateur sports center at the north end of the Ground.

Industrial heritage The rivers that attracted Native Americans and Roger Williams in the seventeenth century provided the power that transformed Providence into a world industrial center in the eighteenth century. Remnants of the Blackstone Canal are still visible in the North Burial Ground.

Eighteenth century milestone markers remain on North Main Street near the Pawtucket line. Railroad tracks run parallel to North Main and the bus depot is just off North Main on Smithfield Avenue. The corridor has a history of mixed transportation uses, though now is a major artery dominated by vehicles.



Hardscrabble Riot Memorial

African American heritage There is a strong African American history along the route. Snowtown and Hard Scrabble were important African American communities, now mostly remembered for the nineteenth century attacks on these neighborhoods. The Cape Verdean community had a large presence in the North Main Street area. The IBC was an important Black social club in the mid-twentieth century. This and other clubs made the corridor an important jazz center.

Sports history Many stakeholders spoke with nostalgia about the street's recent history as a sports center. For many people, North Main is the route they travelled to attend professional football, hockey, basketball, and bicycle racing. While the Steam Rollers, Rhode Island Reds, and stadium are gone, names and places like the Penalty Box remind us of their impact. Even now, North Main Street is closely associated with amateur sports and exercise. The Billy Taylor Days engage youth in basketball. North Main Street is also part of the routes for the Rock-N-Roll Half Marathon, the AMICA Iron Man, and the Cox half and full marathons.



Historic Steam Rollers poster

Health care While historical resources have been most frequently cited in our research, the health care institutions along North Main Street are an often cited reason for travel along the corridor today. Miriam Hospital is the corridor's anchor health care institution. The hospital has its roots in the neighborhood's Jewish history. When young Jewish doctors were excluded from practicing medicine, Jewish women raised money to found the hospital.

Healthy living Nine parks and the North Burial Ground create open walking spaces along the corridor inviting people interested in physical activity. Farmers' markets, community markets, and a Whole Foods grocery represent a cluster of local-sourced resources for healthy living.

A major corridor North Main Street is a major bus route and the key connector between Providence and Pawtucket. The corridor stretches from Kennedy Plaza in downtown Providence to the Pawtucket line. Residential areas lie mostly to the east of Main Street, so commuters mostly see institutions, businesses, open spaces, and abandoned buildings near the Pawtucket city line.

Places that matter Cultural attractions with potential for way-finding and bus stop identification:

- North Burial Ground (especially access points and interpretive trails)
- Roger Williams National Memorial
- Dexter House (Preserve RI headquarters)
- Snowtown and Hard Scrabble memorials
- Milestone markers
- Rochambeau Square
- Liberty Tree
- Miriam Hospital
- Parks: Ninth Street, Summit, Collyer, Billy Taylor, Prospect Terrace, South Main Street, Station, Waterplace, Kennedy Plaza
- Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art
- Everett Dance Theatre
- Historic districts: Mount Hope, Doyle Avenue, College Hill, Downtown
- Armory

Broad Street -- Experiencing World Cultures

International Character Broad Street is most notable for its international character, especially its distinctive concentration of international markets and world foods (restaurants, food trucks, and bodegas). Recognizing this energy, the Broad Street Merchant Association (BSMA) has branded the street as an “International Marketplace.” Today, the north end of Broad Street is distinctly multicultural and the south end is distinctly Dominican. There is a strong sense of neighborhood. Many people travel to Broad Street business centers and neighborhoods to experience its foods, Dominican and Puerto Rican celebrations, and ambience. For many local residents, Broad Street is the town common. Its colorful diversity provides ample inspiration for artists and designers to interpret its world cultures’ theme.



Broad Street Merchant Association Branding

Artist guidelines Artists and designers will interpret the diverse ethnic character of Broad Street -- a vibrant commercial center with active streets and sidewalks, filled with entertainment, food, social life, colorful murals, and small businesses operated by local, mostly Latino and Asian entrepreneurs. The visual and human energy provide artists opportunities to be part of, and to enhance a lively environment. The street provides access to Roger Williams Park, the City’s major outdoor and cultural attraction. Artists may find cultural references from the many people who have been part of its past and whose stories connect with current residents. Artists may build on Broad Street’s function as a place to gather, dine, celebrate, and establish or patronize local businesses.



Dominican Festival

Waves of settlers The international flavor is genuine. Following the ancient Pequot trail, immigrants and their descendants have long made their mark along Broad Street, creating an active street life uncommon outside Downtown. Successive waves of settlers have made Broad Street home, from the earliest Native people, to Irish American settlements, early Irish immigrants, then French Canadian, German, Swedes, Southeast Asians, and Latinos.



A Broad Street Food Truck

Commercial hub and nightlife Broad Street is a busy commercial hub, one of Providence’s seven Neighborhood Market areas, and the busiest commercial district in South Providence. The route is notable for the vitality of its 120 small businesses, often operated by recent immigrants or their families. There is a remarkable concentration

of good ethnic restaurants, specialty markets, and bodegas. Each evening Broad Street enlivens as food trucks pull up, music spills out from vehicles and businesses, people shop at the bodegas, night clubs open, and neighbors and visitors gather on the street. The food trucks are a distinctive Broad Street presence -- a Providence innovation that started as horse-drawn trucks for third-shift factory workers.

Ethnic pride and Festivals Algonquin House is home to the Rhode Island Indian Council, scores of nonprofit cultural organizations, and a popular farmers' market. The Dominican Festival on Broad Street has, for 25 years, been a popular celebration of Dominican culture. The Puerto Rican Parade is another special Broad Street event.

Gateway to Roger Williams Park Like Elmwood, Broad Street is also a connector and gateway to Roger Williams Park, a major cultural destination, notable for the zoo, open space, public art, and cultural programming.

Murals There are several notable murals along Broad Street, as well as significant historic homes, buildings, parks, and cemeteries. There is also a concentration of youth arts programs. Broad Street is known for its high-quality murals. These are perfect examples of artists working with neighbors and local business people to animate and define places creatively. More murals are planned.

A major route Broad Street is a major bus route linking three public high schools. The northern end of corridor starts at the edge of downtown and I95. Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue diverge at the iconic Trinity Square and historic Grace Church Cemetery. The Street continues through a busy commercial district, past the major eastern entrance to Roger Williams Park and continues on past the park, ending at the City line just past the Washington Park School.



La Plaza del Arte y Las Culturas - detail

Places that matter Cultural attractions with potential for way-finding and bus stop identification

- Roger Williams Park
- Trinity Square
- Southside Cultural Center
- Grace Church cemetery
- Algonquin House, housing many cultural groups
- City Arts! and Highlander School
- Historic homes
- Murals
- The William B. Cooley, Sr. High School & The Providence Academy of International Studies @ The Juanita Sanchez Complex
- The Met School
- High Schools: Classical, Central, Providence Career & Technical Academy
- Broad Street Synagogue (soon to be the Broad Street Cultural Center)
- Bomes Theatre



Grace Church Cemetery

- Historic districts
- Parks: Sales, Amos Earley, Roger Williams

Elmwood Avenue -- Gateway to Opportunity

Public transit and opportunity Elmwood Avenue's most distinctive features are its origins as an elm tree-lined trolley suburb and its contemporary pathway to the American Dream for many new immigrants. It was designed as a greenway to Roger Williams Park. The trolley and new building lots encouraged prosperous 19th century Providence residents to move out to the City's first suburb. The avenue and its distinctive historic homes were built up through public transportation. As the Knight family and other successful business and mill owners sought to move up and out in the world, they settled along Elmwood Avenue. Artists and designers can interpret the concept of a greenway or path designed to attract people seeking opportunities and a better life. This was true in the 1880s and it is true today.



1889 View of Elmwood Avenue

Artist guidelines The challenge for artists and designers is to visualize Elmwood Avenue's important role to help residents aspire to a better life -- rooted in its history as the City's first suburb and its function today as a welcome gateway for new citizens. Artists may find opportunities to recognize the role of public transit in the founding of the neighborhood and as a gateway to opportunity. While the graceful elms and promenades are gone, and it no longer seems like the greenway to Roger Williams Park, Elmwood continues to serve people's aspirations to prosper. It is still a main route to the park. Artists may see possibilities to bring back a sense of grandeur to this wide boulevard and to hint to the grand park at one end, connecting with the downtown on the other. The City intends to restore some of the tree canopy.



Historic Elmwood Home

Changes to the corridor The elms and trolleys are gone and the gracious promenades have been converted to parking. However, the wide profile of the street and many historic homes remain. The first families have been joined or replaced by new immigrants who find the corridor and its services a supportive pathway to citizenship.

Connection to Broad Street Elmwood Avenue converges with the Broad Street corridor and shares many of Broad Street's attributes, most notably its internationalism. One neighborhood stakeholder

wrote, “Elmwood is Broad Street’s calmer cousin.” Much of the corridor feels like a residential neighborhood. Many historic homes remain. There are plans to restore trees along the avenue.

Columbus Square Columbus Square and its statue are the most frequently cited cultural icons along the corridor. This statue of Columbus was designed by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, designer of the Statue of Liberty, and cast by Elmwood Avenue’s Gorham Silver Co. in 1893. A plaza around the statue could be the site of special events, markets, and temporary art installations. There is a lively cluster of some 30 businesses around Columbus Square, a hub designated by the city for redevelopment.



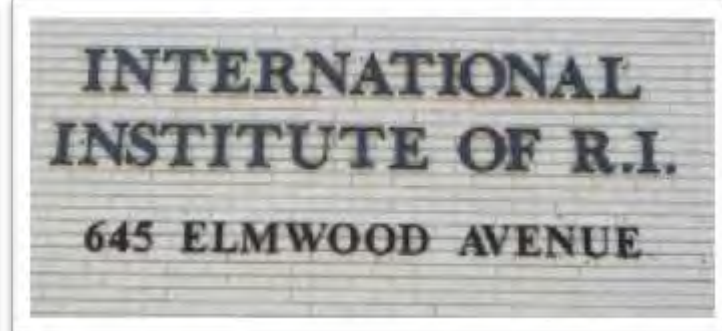
Columbus Square

International foods Good restaurants abound. The Liberty Elm Diner is a National Register listed building and a great stop for pie. An emerging Elmwood Merchant’s association has been exploring a theme, “the City’s cornucopia.”

Home to new citizens Many stakeholders think of Elmwood as a *Gateway to Citizenship*. There are many newly arrived immigrants and a cluster of important immigrant services.



Triple Decker Homes



Detail from International Institute of RI

Places that matter Cultural attractions with potential for way-finding and bus stop identification:

- Trinity Square
- Southside Cultural Center
- Columbus Square – most frequently cited cultural resource, gateway, Columbus statue



Historic Liberty Elm Diner

- designed by Agustin Bartoli (Statue of Liberty) and cast by Gorham Silver
- Knight Memorial Library
- Roger Williams Park
- Parks: Bucklin Park (used to be a pond, part of Narragansett Bay), Ardoene, Peace & Plenty
- Mashapaug Pond
- Locust Grove and Grace Church cemeteries
- Former Gorham Silver factory (now gone, but one of five 19th century industrial wonders of the world, a factory in a park. Area streets named after silverware patterns, or vice versa)
- Historic districts

Chalkstone Avenue -- Honoring Providence's Workers

Providence's historic and contemporary workers Chalkstone Avenue is distinguished by its working people, founded with worker's housing and a trolley to accommodate the workforce for Providence's 19th century factories and mills. The people of Chalkstone Avenue made possible Providence's industrial revolution. The route was shaped through public transportation. Today the neighborhoods of Chalkstone Avenue are home to the City's working people and their families including manufacturing workers, artists, teachers, retail and service workers, and many others. Labor Day is an apt celebration. One neighborhood, dubbed "Cop Land" has been home to many in the Providence police force. Firefighters also call the corridor home.

Artist guidelines The corridor's theme of *Honoring Providence's Workers* may inspire oral histories, portraits, and public art that recognize the neighborhood's workers, veterans, heroes, and the families of Chalkstone Avenue. Artists and designers who interpret Chalkstone's critical role will find many opportunities among its rich resources to honor and engage people of all ages. As the neighborhoods are less connected than many others in the City, artist-led projects that involve and connect neighbors may inspire a stronger sense of community cohesion.

Labor and political history City leaders must have recognized the area's proud labor history and significant Latino population when they relocated the statue of the labor-movement hero, Cesar Chavez, to the neighborhood's Davis Park. The farm labor organizer is a fitting icon for the largely blue-collar neighborhoods of the Chalkstone Avenue corridor. Chalkstone neighborhoods have been quite influential in local politics and home to political leaders important to Providence and Rhode Island.



Cesar Chavez Statue in Davis Park

Affordable housing Affordable properties and proximity to downtown makes the area a place where families can get established. It is densely settled. Triple decker homes are a predominant building style.

Diversity Like the other corridors, neighborhoods are distinctly multicultural. More well-to-do residential areas, mostly to the north, converge on Chalkstone with multi-family dwellings on the south. Public schools within the neighborhood are complemented with colleges and private schools on the edges. Youth are abundant while recreational, creative, and organized social facilities are nominal. Local and visiting veterans come to the VA Hospital. Public servants are numerous among the residents. An active senior center sits in the central part of the corridor.

Hospitals The Providence VA Medical Center serves veterans with inpatient and outpatient medical services. One stakeholder observed about the VA Center, “We’re routinely visited by heroes.” The Roger Williams Medical Center just across Chalkstone Avenue helps define a gateway.

Vibrant commercial center Local businesses in the commercial corridor serve resident’s daily needs. These range from Stop and Shop grocery, to mom and pop stores, bakeries, hair salons, electronic shops, a funeral home, and an eclectic mix of local restaurants throughout. The workaday environment serves a wide mix of people both ethnically and of economic means. While businesses seem mostly to serve local residents, Los Andes is Trip Advisors’ most highly rated restaurant in Providence and a regional cultural attraction. Chalkstone converges with the Manton Avenue corridor on the west and stretches east to the Smith-Chalkstone Gateway. A compact commercial core is characterized by gathering places and local services such as markets, bakeries, restaurants, churches, the Castle Theatre and other community services in a ten-block stretch from Academy Avenue to the two medical centers.



Chalkstone Avenue Housing



VA Center Road Signs

Open spaces Chalkstone is also graced by welcoming open spaces. Davis Park is centrally located with paths, ball fields, play grounds, and a community garden. Triggs Memorial Golf Course creates a large open space.



Pleasant Valley Parkway



Public Art and Community Garden in Davis Park

City Beautiful gem Just a block north of the shops and closely spaced triple deckers on Chalkstone is a street quite unlike its neighbors. The Pleasant Valley Parkway is a City Beautiful-era, Olmsted-designed gem, a short, tree-lined greenway with larger homes with foot bridges spanning a central streambed. Stakeholders said kids flock each October to the Parkway to visit door-to-door and experience one of the City's last old fashioned neighborhood Halloweens.

Places that matter Cultural attractions with potential for way-finding and bus stop identification:

- Parks: Davis Park, George West Water Park
- Pleasant Valley Parkway
- Nathaniel Green Middle School
- Regional Library
- Roger Williams Medical Center
- Providence VA Medical Center
- Castle Theater (vacant)
- Triggs Memorial Golf Course
- Fruit Hill and Smith Hill neighborhoods
- St. Patrick's Parade along Smith Street, Pat's pub

Manton Avenue – Creative Energy and Industrial Heritage

Creative Energy and Industrial Heritage Manton Avenue was shaped by, and still follows the Woonasquatucket River, which provided water energy for the industrial-age mills on the corridor. Today, a renewed creative energy powers the Avenue's revitalization and industrial structures provide homes for them. Artists, architects, and creative developers have been transforming gritty industrial spaces into offices, loft apartments, studios, and other revitalization initiatives. Many new housing projects are testament to the neighborhood's energy. Bustling activity in Olneyville is apparent. The creative energy theme captures the historic sense of water power, the waves of immigration and flow of new people over time, and the current creative source of neighborhood transformation. Like the river that shaped Manton Avenue, the people, its historic buildings, and creative enterprises are an ever-changing flow. The creative energy and industrial heritage theme captures both the historic sense of water energy and the current creative source of neighborhood transformation.

Artist guidelines As artists interpret the theme of *Creative Energy and Industrial Heritage*, they may tap the corridor's creative energy that builds upon an industrial heritage, the Woonasquatucket River, and waves of immigrants. Artists should note that residents value both the route's industrial aesthetic and its natural environment. Its resources suggest *flow* as a creative metaphor -- from a flowing river to an ever-changing community. As one of Providence's industrial engines, the mills along the Woonasquatucket River took their power from the river. Waves of immigrants brought new energy and ideas. Combined with entrepreneurial spirit and ingenuity, the stream of people and creativity continues today and provides a renewable source of energy. The much-used Riverside Park, the Greenway, historic buildings, and today's creative entrepreneurs suggest a flow between the past, present, and future. Artists may interact with and help to connect this active residential, commercial, natural, creative, and social environment.



Creative Sign to River Greenway



RIPTA Bus, Riders, and Manton Ave. Housing

River and greenway The river, greenway, and natural environment define the corridor's west border and unite the corridor. Historic industrial buildings stand as vivid reminders of the region's industrial heritage. Many have been creatively repurposed. The contemporary creative renaissance powered by artists, musicians, and creative developers are transforming Olneyville. Highly developed spaces like Rising Sun Mills and Fete music club mingle with funky alternative spaces like the Dirt Palace. There is a lively underground art and music scene. The energy is unmistakable.



Public Art

acknowledged this by retaining critical industrial brick architecture even as they open up spaces with glass and steel. Public art demonstrates residents' values when contemporary art is wrapped around an industrial era smokestack (pictured above). Residents also value the natural environment along the Woonasquatucket River as when the Greenway is portrayed in a mural. Effective public art works in the district build upon the corridor's industrial heritage.

Olneyville energy Creative energy is concentrated in Olneyville at the south end of the Manton Avenue Corridor. Here developers have transformed mills into housing, offices, restaurants, and night clubs. Artists have created studios in former mills and retail spaces. There is a vibrant underground arts scene that defies inventorying. Walking the streets of Olneyville, one sees public art, store front art exhibitions, and may hear drums thumping from within industrial spaces.

Historic buildings Looking north along Manton Avenue from Olneyville, the skyline is dominated



Providence artist Munir Mohammed working on Mural near Woonasquatucket River

Urban and natural aesthetics Stakeholders described an urban-industrial aesthetic. They hope to retain a sense of their industrial heritage even as neighborhoods are developed to be more prosperous. Developers have



Atlantic Mills



St. Theresa's Cathedral

by two historic buildings: the massive Atlantic Mills complex with its two iconic towers and the historic, but vacant St. Theresa's Cathedral.

Other places that matter Midway up the corridor a commercial district is defined by the neighborhood's informal community center, Anthony's Drug. Several intersections suggest natural gateways down the hill to Riverside Park and the bike path. As one continues north along Manton Avenue, buildings thin out and it seems one may have left Providence until reaching a convergence with the Chalkstone Avenue Corridor. The dominant features of Upper Manton are busy intersections around the Stop and Shop plaza and St. Thomas Regional School. Upper and lower portions of Manton Avenue are quite different from each other, and the route is aesthetically discontinuous. The Woonasquatucket River continues to shape people's use of the corridor.



New York System

Greenway opportunities The Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council and its community partners have restored public access to the river with a greenway, bike path, and playgrounds. Streets to the river have been restored to public use. Corridor gateways can further enhance awareness and access to the greenway, bike path, and river.

Places that matter Cultural attractions with potential for way-finding and bus stop identification:

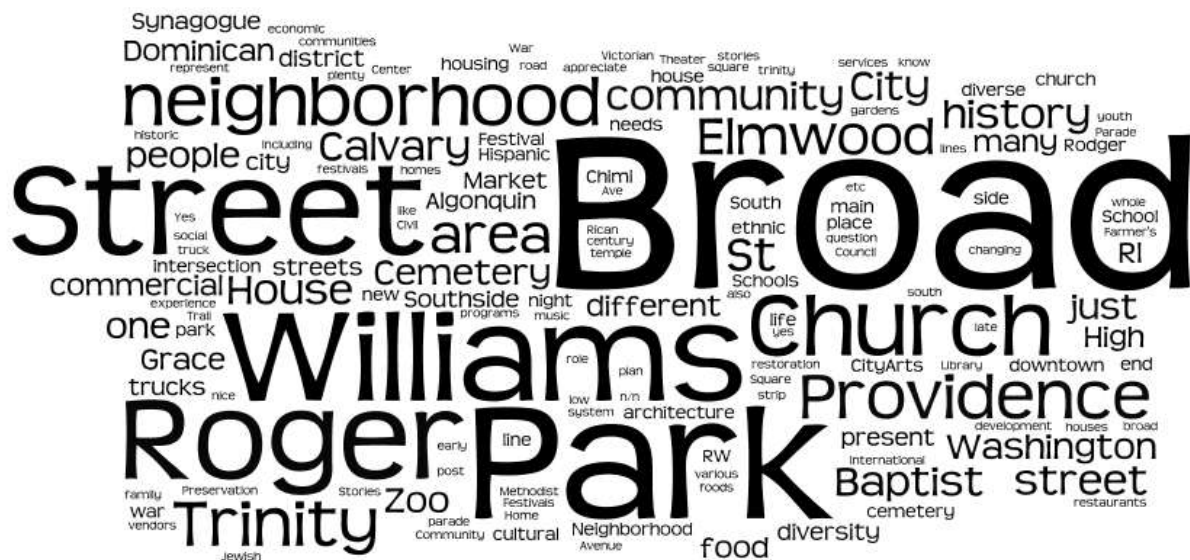
- Woonasquatucket River
- Olneyville Square
- Atlantic Mills
- New York System Hot Wieners
- Aleppo Street gateway to Riverside Park (and other greenway gateways) / bike path
- Parks: Riverside Park, Merino Park, Donigan Park
- Anthony's Drugstore
- St. Theresa church
- Fruit Hill



Banner with River and Olneyville Reference

Broad Street Survey Results

Fifty one people responded to an online survey that was issued during the summer of 2012 to help understand the distinct identity of Broad Street. They answered two questions to define the street's character and help identify places, stories, special events, and other features to suggest a distinct corridor theme. In the coming months and years, the theme will help inform local artists as they work to integrate art into bus shelters and other key locations along the corridors. Each corridor's theme will reflect and reinforce that corridor's design and unique cultural heritage and provide a sense of orientation that connects people and places along the street in a meaningful way.



Word cloud by Wordle.net comprised of key words from survey responses

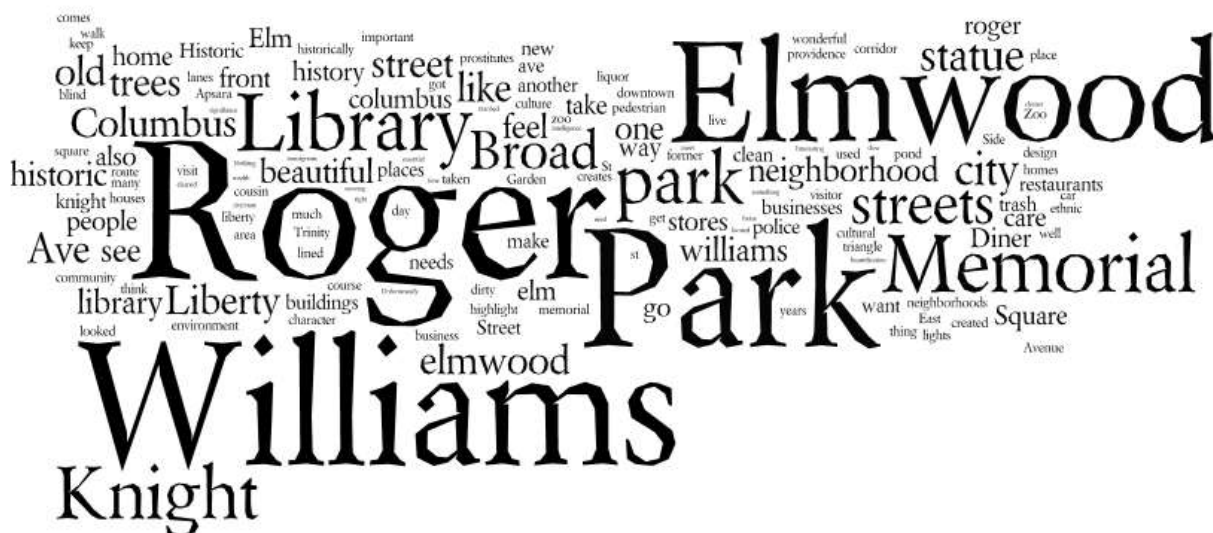
Following are the features or characteristics most frequently mentioned with the number of survey respondents who cited that or a similar element.

Roger Williams Park (Cited by 31)
 Ethnic diversity, Dominican, or
 immigration (22)
 Food: restaurants, markets, food trucks,
 farmers' markets, community gardens
 (17)
 Neighborhood(s), Village-like (19)
 Historic architecture (15)
 Festivals, especially Dominican Festival
 and Puerto Rican parade (11)
 Trinity Church or Square (10)
 Calvary Baptist Church (7)
 Grace Cemetery (7)
 Broad Street Synagogue (5)

Historic route (4)
 City Arts (4)
 High schools (4)
 Washington Park Library (3)
 Washington Park (3)
 Algonquin House (3)
 Murals (2)
 Bell Funeral Home (2)

Elmwood Avenue Survey Results

Forty-six people responded to an online survey that was issued during the summer of 2012 to help understand the distinct identity of Elmwood Avenue. They answered two questions to define the street's character and help identify places, stories, special events, and other features to suggest a distinct corridor theme. Survey responses supplemented findings from stakeholder meetings, an inventory of cultural resources, interviews, and consulting team observations. In the coming months and years, the theme will help inform local artists as they work to integrate art into bus shelters and other key locations along the corridors. Each corridor's theme will reflect and reinforce that corridor's design and unique cultural heritage and provide a sense of orientation that connects people and places along the street in a meaningful way.

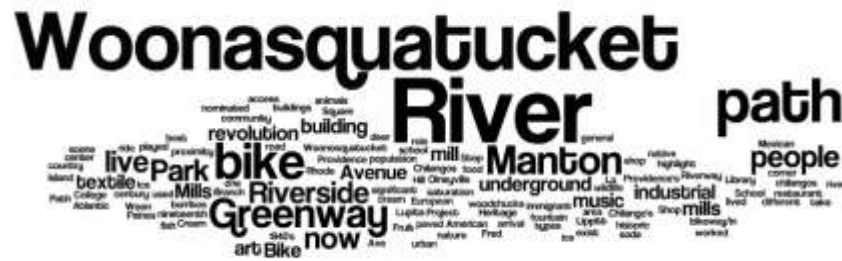


Word Cloud by Wordle.net comprised of key words from Elmwood survey responses

Following are the features or characteristics most frequently mentioned with the number of survey respondents who cited that or a similar element.

- Roger Williams Park or Zoo (Cited by 35 survey respondents)
- Knight Memorial Library (18)
- Trash, dirt, or other unpleasantness (10)
- Trees, especially lost elms (8)
- Historic buildings (7)
- Columbus square or statue (6)
- Liberty Elm Diner (6)
- Diversity of residents (4)
- Restaurants (4)
- Cemeteries (2)

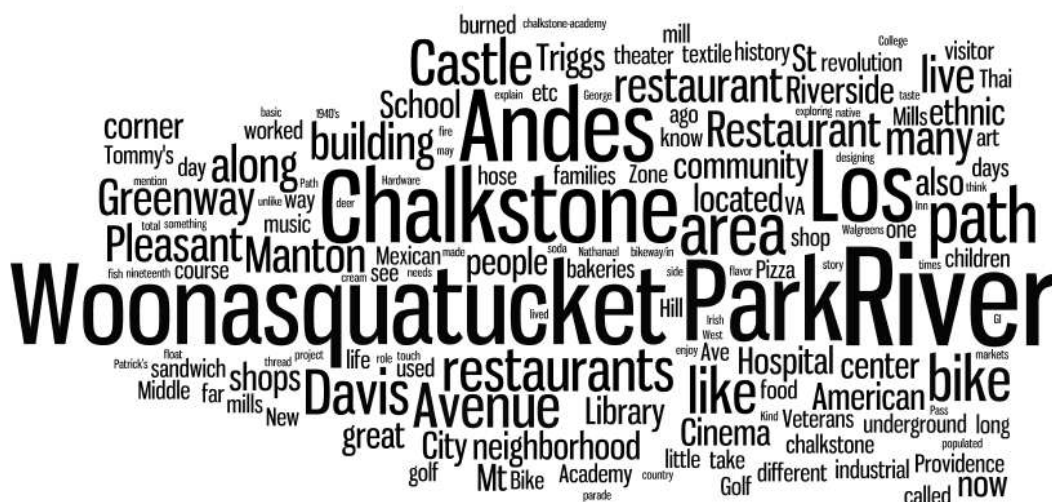
Eleven Manton Avenue stakeholders responded to an online survey in September, 2012 to help understand the distinct identity of Manton Avenue. They answered two questions to define the street's character and help identify places, stories, special events, and other features to suggest a distinct corridor theme. Survey responses from this small sample supplemented findings from stakeholder meetings, an inventory of cultural resources, interviews, and consulting team observations. In the coming months and years, the theme will help inform local artists as they work to integrate art into bus shelters and other key locations along the corridors. Each corridor's theme will reflect and reinforce that corridor's design and unique cultural heritage and provide a sense of orientation that connects people and places along the street in a meaningful way.



Most frequently cited cultural resources

- 32

Thirty-two Chalkstone Avenue stakeholders responded to an online survey that was issued in September, 2012 to help understand the distinct identity of Chalkstone Avenue. They answered two questions to define the street's character and help identify places, stories, special events, and other features to suggest a distinct corridor theme. Survey responses supplemented findings from stakeholder meetings, an inventory of cultural resources, interviews, and consulting team observations. In the coming months and years, the theme will help inform local artists as they work to integrate art into bus shelters and other key locations along the corridors. Each corridor's theme will reflect and reinforce that corridor's design and unique cultural heritage and provide a sense of orientation that connects people and places along the street in a meaningful way.



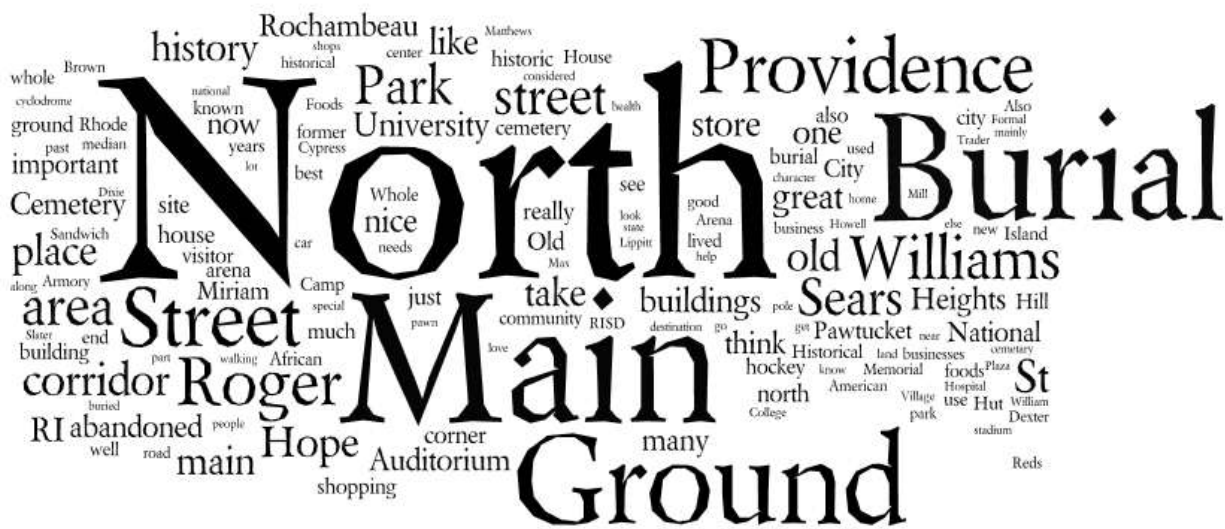
word cloud of most frequently cited cultural resources

- Ethnic restaurants (cited 12 times)
- Woonasquatucket River, Greenway (11)
- Davis Park, playgrounds, community garden (7)
- Diversity of population (8)
- Los Andes Restaurant (8)
- Castle Cinema building (vacant) (7)
- Bike path (7)
- Chalkstone Avenue shops (6)
- VA and Roger Williams hospitals (5)
- Trigg's Golf Course (3)
- Pleasant Valley Parkway (2)
- Tommy's Pizza (2)
- St. Patrick's Parade (2)
- Libraries (2)
- Historic mill buildings (2)

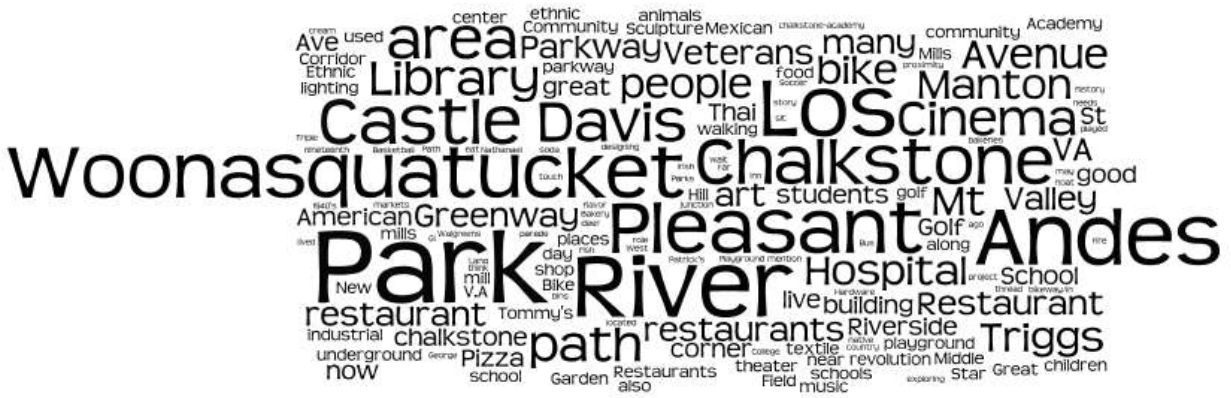
Corridor Theme Key Words

The following Word Clouds combine key words provided by stakeholders for all five corridors combining results from surveys, public meetings, stakeholder meetings, and focus groups.

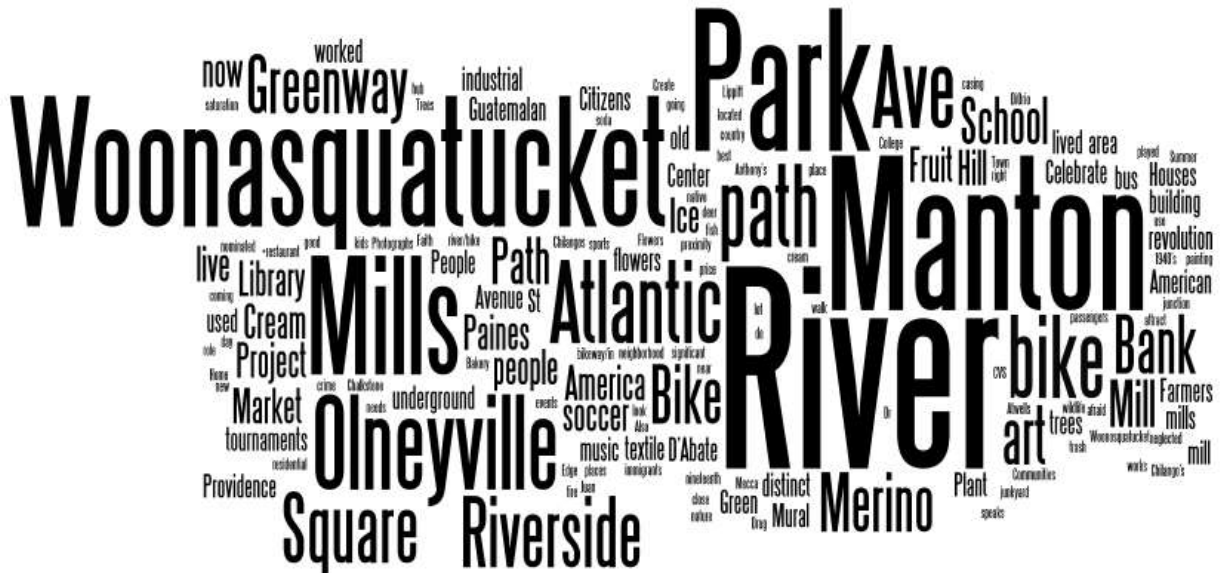
North Main Street



Chalkstone Avenue



Manton Avenue



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Methods and Work Plan

Phase 1. Cultural Assets Inventory

May 14 2012 ~ Preparation and preliminary planning discussions Dreeszen meets with AC+T staff to refine the inventory and planning process and timeline and to determine key stakeholders. We set dates for Project Advisory Committee and Stakeholder Committee meetings. We gather plans, reports, corridor maps, and other documents that may inform the inventory and planning. Dreeszen reviews documents.

May - June 2012 ~ Catalogue opportunities for cultural participation along each corridor We identify and access existing local and state directories and databases to identify arts and cultural organizations, visual and performing arts venues, public art installations, historic sites, creative industries, and artist housing. These sources may include: AC+T, RISCA, RIF, RICH, Yellow Pages, Chamber of Commerce, and Advisory Committee members. We also access regional and national directories including: NEFA's Culture Count and Matchbook.com, Guidestar.com, Americans for the Arts' Dun and Bradstreet creative industry data, Googlemaps, and national business databases.

We build the inventory using an interactive database (Google docs) that allows our local and national researchers to collaborate simultaneously as they build the database from national directories and local, on-the-ground observations and discussions. We have the capacity to include images. We work with the Department of Planning and Development to plot cultural resources on corridor maps and determine which fall within the quarter mile corridors. At the conclusion of this first phase, we download the Google docs data into an excel file with the fields as specified in the RFP or as subsequently revised through discussions with AC+T and the Department of Planning and Development:

May – June ~ Meet local partners and explore corridors We identify and meet with local arts and cultural organization leaders, local heritage leaders, and other community representatives who may suggest informal spaces, events, and sites with historic or community significance. We ride buses, drive, and walk to explore the corridors and surrounding streets noting additional opportunities for cultural participation and taking photographs of representative cultural features and potential nodes. We share a draft of the inventory with AC+T staff and members of the Advisory Committee, Stakeholder Committees, and partners to identify gaps.

July 2012 ~ Develop inventory We build an Excel database that catalogues cultural opportunities within a quarter mile of each of the five corridors, providing details as specified in task 1 of the RFP's scope of work.

July 2012 ~ Submit inventory deliverables We present the database of cultural opportunities for each corridor as an Excel file as specified in the RFP. We submit this first deliverable by July 2012.

Phase 2. Develop Interpretive Themes for each of the Five Study Corridors

June 2012 ~ Synthesize inventory Our first step of phase two is to summarize preliminary inventory findings, and seek iconic images, stories, history, people, traditions, sites, buildings, etc. that suggest themes that arise from the authentic heritage of places along each corridor. Dreeszen & Associates summarize key facts and representative images, and potential themes, and identify potential

developmental nodes for each corridor. AC+T distributes the summary to stakeholder groups in anticipation of our first meeting.

July – August ~ Identify potential themes We develop the theme for each corridor collaboratively, balancing on-the-ground evidence from cultural asset inventories with opinions of stakeholder groups and the professional expertise of the consulting team. We consult with local experts including neighborhood representatives, cultural leaders, heritage experts, and artists.

We expect vigorous discussions that yield clearly favorite themes. With long experience in negotiating decisions, we expect disagreements to be resolved as an integral part of the process. We determine in advance who has final authority to accept recommended themes, should there be more than one viable concept for a corridor.

We aim for themes that arise authentically from and celebrate each place, may be interpreted artistically (streetscape amenities, way-finding signage, public art, etc.), contribute a visual identity, help define each corridor as a distinctive place, and have potential to inspire development of transforming community hubs.

Convene first Project Advisory Committee meeting We meet with members of the Project Advisory Committee to accomplish three tasks: 1) We share results of the asset inventory; 2) consider and refine early versions or alternatives for each corridor theme; and 3) begin to explore potential strategies to integrate arts, culture, housing, and development opportunities at key nodes along each corridor. We invite advisors to suggest additional experts and partners that should be consulted in the project's third strategy task.

September ~ Convene stakeholders We collaborate with AC+T staff to design interactive planning sessions with each stakeholder group. As Dreeszen drives to Providence from September through December each Tuesday to teach at Brown University, we can meet frequently to coordinate planning. We work with the Department of Planning and Development to plot identified cultural resources on corridor maps and to identify promising nodes for development.

We convene each of the five stakeholder groups to help generate potential themes. As Tom Borrup travels from Minneapolis to participate, we schedule these meetings in a tight cluster. The meetings would be organized as neighborhood design charrettes, hopefully hosted by one of the cultural venues within each corridor. If agreeable with stakeholder teams, AC+T staff, Project Advisory Committee members, and Brown cultural policy students are invited.

September ~ Submit corridor theme deliverables We present a report that recommends a theme for each corridor by September 2012. We share theme reports first in draft form with AC+T, Corridor Advisors, and the Project Advisory Committee. We revise as necessary. We present a final editable file and a PDF of the report that includes the theme for each corridor, a rationale, relevant images, back up data, and documentation of methods and participants.

Phase 3. Plan Strategies to Integrate Arts and Culture, Housing, and Job Opportunities at Key Nodes along the Five Study Corridors

September ~ Meet experts and partners We consult with the Department of Arts, Culture + Tourism (AC+T), Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA), the Department of Planning and Development,

and other key partners to assure our plans align with partner priorities. If the design consultant has been identified, we coordinate with the designers.

September ~ Develop preliminary strategies The consulting team, working in collaboration with AC+T and partners, develop first-draft strategies that integrate arts and culture, housing, and job opportunities at high-potential nodes along the five study corridors.

We work closely with AC+T to identify locations where cultural assets, opportunities, and local enthusiasm indicate high potential for creative placemaking and increased cultural participation. We anticipate that most strategies will be place-specific while others will advance the City's priorities along the length of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 corridors or beyond.

We write the plan with outcomes in mind, describing anticipated results when plans are implemented, specific actions required for critical tasks, key agencies responsible, and when possible, likely costs and potential for investment. We create concise statements of overall goals and strategies. Plans incorporate City priorities for neighborhoods, cultural participation, creativity, job creation, housing, and social diversity.

While the consulting team leads plan writing, planning is thoroughly collaborative. We share and refine drafts with partners and advisors. Because the resulting plan reflects City and neighborhood priorities and commitment, implementation is more assured than if recommendations were to be imposed from outside experts.

We review and integrate complementary plans for transit, housing, economic development, workforce development, tourism, and cultural participation into our strategies. We work closely with AC+T and the Department of Planning and Development to recommend specific outcomes and actions to help shape the City's zoning changes. We work with RIPTA to be sure creative placemaking plans work feasibly with transit corridor plans and stops.

October ~ Convene second Project Advisory Committee meeting We convene advisors to review and help refine draft strategies. AC+T staff and key partners may participate. Advisors critique and help ground the plans with reality so that plans are feasible and may be implemented with community support. Brown cultural policy students observe.

October – November ~ Write and revise plans The consulting team revises draft plans to incorporate recommendations from Project Advisors, AC+T staff, and partners. We share the revised draft with AC+T and key partners that wish to engage this deeply in the planning. We finalize the plan.

November 2012 ~ Submit plan as final deliverable The consulting team presents the finished plan as specified in the RFP with hard copies and electronic files in Word and PDF with backup documentation of methods, participants, and data sets.