



# TOWN OF NORTH KINGSTOWN

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2019  
10-YEAR RE-WRITE



PREPARED BY:  
**INTERFACE STUDIO**

# **TOWN OF NORTH KINGSTOWN**

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Kerry P. McKay  
Kevin Maloney  
Ellen Waxman

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TOWN OF  
NORTH KINGSTOWN  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
2019  
10-YEAR RE-WRITE

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS PLAN:

### STEERING COMMITTEE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION	9
II. OVERVIEW OF NORTH KINGSTOWN	17
III. PLANNING PROCESS	25
IV. PLAN ELEMENTS	37
<b>ELEMENT 1</b> A Vibrant Town - Economic Development	45
<b>ELEMENT 2</b> A Livable Town - Housing and Neighborhoods	79
<b>ELEMENT 3</b> A Connected Town - Transportation and Circulation	99
<b>ELEMENT 4</b> A Sustainable Town - Open Space, Recreation and The Environment	117
<b>ELEMENT 5</b> A Historic Town - Historic and Cultural Resources	143
<b>ELEMENT 6</b> A Civic-Minded Town - Community Services, Facilities, and Communication	155
<b>ELEMENT 7</b> A Resilient Town - Natural Hazards and Climate Adaptation	173
<b>ELEMENT 8</b> A Forward-Thinking Town - Land Use	191
V. IMPLEMENTATION	230
APPENDIX under separate cover	

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# LIST OF FIGURES

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Figure 1. Timeline of North Kingstown	18	Figure 35. Median sale price trend for single family home, 2003-2015	87
Figure 2. Population change in North Kingstown, 1940-2013	21	Figure 36. North Kingstown average rent, 2004-2014	87
Figure 3. Indexed population change, 2004-2013	21	Figure 37. Survey responses regarding housing	92
Figure 4. Median household income, 2009-2013	23	Figure 38. Transportation network map	101
Figure 5. Distribution of households by median income, 2013	23	Figure 39. Highway functional classification map	103
Figure 6. Planning process schedule	26	Figure 40. Transit access map	104
Figure 7. Breakdown of 2008 and 2015 survey participant neighborhoods	29	Figure 41. Summary of public forum activity	106
Figure 8. Map and summary of resident survey participants	30	Figure 42. Survey responses regarding circulation	106
Figure 9. Resident survey summary diagrams	31	Figure 43. Proposed redesign of north Post Road	109
Figure 10. Collaborative map comments	34	Figure 44. Proposed road diet and redesign of south Post Road	110
Figure 11. Priority goals and actions summary	42	Figure 45. Proposed bike network map	113
Figure 12. Job growth, 2004-2014	46	Figure 46. Conservation areas map	119
Figure 13. Total jobs, 2003-2014	46	Figure 47. Water resources map	121
Figure 14. Jobs by industry sector in North Kingstown, 2014	47	Figure 48. Natural habitats map	122
Figure 15. Job by industry sector in Rhode Island, 2014	47	Figure 49. Diagram illustrating water quality impacts	123
Figure 16. Job change by industry sector in North Kingstown and Rhode Island, 5-year and 10-year trends	47	Figure 50. Comparison of publicly accessible open space	124
Figure 17. Employment by census block group, 2012	48	Figure 51. Park access map	125
Figure 18. Breakdown of business types, 2015	50	Figure 52. Recreational areas map	126
Figure 19. Post Road commercial properties map	53	Figure 53. Diagram illustrating measures to protect water quality	131
Figure 20. Post Road crash hot spots	54	Figure 54. Historic and scenic resources map	146
Figure 21. Survey responses regarding commercial development	57	Figure 55. Public infrastructure map	157
Figure 22. Summary of public forum activity	58	Figure 56. Water service area map	159
Figure 23. Proposed Post Road improvements to address physical and regulatory barriers to revitalization	69	Figure 57. Sewer service area map	161
Figure 24. Proposed improvements to Wickford to enhance its waterfront location and connect destinations	71	Figure 58. Flood hazard areas map	176
Figure 25. Proposed short-term and long-term public space improvements to Wickford waterfront incorporating flood resistance	72	Figure 59. Worst hurricane scenario map	178
Figure 26. Proposed public space improvements to Wickford parking lot	72	Figure 60. Historic and projected sea level rise	179
Figure 27. Proposed improvements to infrastructure, connectivity and programming at Wickford Junction to support development	75	Figure 61. Average daily level of high tide in Wickford today	181
Figure 28. Development over time, pre-1950s-2010s	80	Figure 62. Average daily level of high tide in Wickford with 1 foot sea level rise and exposure in North Kingstown	181
Figure 29. Population density map	84	Figure 63. Average daily level of high tide in Wickford with 3 foot sea level rise and exposure in North Kingstown	182
Figure 30. Household types and change, 2000-2010	85	Figure 64. Average daily level of high tide in Wickford with 5 foot sea level rise and exposure in North Kingstown	182
Figure 31. Age distribution and change, 2000-2013	86	Figure 65. Flood resilience and adaptation measures	184
Figure 32. Housing type, 2010	86	Figure 66. Existing land use map	193
Figure 33. Housing production, 2000-2014	86	Figure 67. Urban services boundary map	195
Figure 34. Housing tenure, 2010	86	Figure 68. Existing zoning districts map	199
		Figure 69. Future land use map	203
		Figure 70. Future land use of inconsistent areas map	204
		Figure 71. Existing zoning in inconsistent areas map	205
		Figure 72. Future zoning in inconsistent areas map	206
		Figure 73. Growth centers by future land use map	216







# i. introduction

# PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**The comprehensive plan is a citizen-driven guide for the future of North Kingstown that guides policy and budgeting decisions.**

The primary purpose of the comprehensive plan is to form a rational basis for long-term physical development in the town and the formulation of zoning ordinances and land use regulations. The comprehensive plan provides a guide to what improvements should happen where and when and enables the Town to pursue grants for implementation.

As a vehicle for achieving community goals for the future, the process requires extensive community involvement. The comprehensive plan process enables a dialogue for competing interests to be expressed and work to present a single policy voice.

This Comprehensive Plan updates the previous 2008 Comprehensive Plan and incorporates the assessment of existing and future needs and conditions over the next 20 years as well as public input collected between April 2015 and April 2016.

The State of Rhode Island requires all municipalities to develop a comprehensive plan with a 20-year planning horizon. The state has a reciprocal system with regard to land use planning wherein State goals and policies as embodied in the State Guide Plan and the laws of the State are reflected in local plans and local plans can guide State actions. The comprehensive plan should be updated and re-adopted not less than every ten years.

The Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act requires that the comprehensive plan address elements that include:

- natural resources,
- recreation,
- historic and cultural resources,
- housing,
- economic development,
- agriculture,
- services and facilities,
- energy,
- water supply,
- transportation,
- natural hazards and climate change, and
- land use.



Public kick off meeting

# WHY PLAN?

## North Kingstown's assets attract residents and businesses but more can be done to define the town's strengths and make it competitive.

North Kingstown's combination of old and new, its town character, amenities, and quality of life are attractive to residents and businesses.

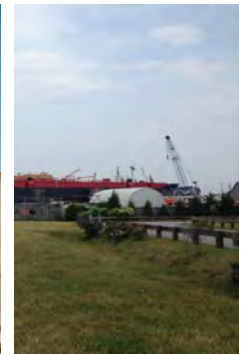
The extensive public outreach made it clear that the residents of North Kingstown love its unique assets - its waterfront location, history, scenic and rural characteristics, high quality schools, and town facilities - and the quality of life that they afford.

North Kingstown also counts among its assets economic strengths built on its industrial infrastructure, farm and marine industries, and transportation and access.

Residents expressed a strong desire to protect these assets while improving areas seen as languishing and directing growth to revitalize traditional village centers and commercial corridors.

However, challenges such as the changing economic climate, infrastructure and environmental constraints, and disconnection require a thoughtful approach to growth and revitalization.

This plan seeks to support the community vision of a thriving town that encourages economic growth to improve quality of life and strengthen the assets that make North Kingstown a desirable place to live.



“To what extent do we want to be a bedroom suburb or quaint New England town or hub of economic activity? It doesn't have to be 'either/or' but is often treated that way.”

# ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

North Kingstown's Comprehensive Plan was approved by the state in February 1995. The 2001 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted in June 2001 and the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted in September and October 2008 by the North Kingstown Planning Commission and North Kingstown Town Council, respectively. This Comprehensive Plan 20-Year Update includes all of the major amendments to the 1995 Plan adopted through 2008, and includes the following amendments that have been adopted since 2008:

- Amendment to Comprehensive Plan; Amend Water Service Area Map; Amend Future Land Use Map for western Route 2/102 intersection to Rural Gateway; Adopted by Town Council on November 30, 2012.
- Ordinance No. 13-06 (Uncodified) - Amendment to Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map Amendment; Adopted by Town Council on July 15, 2013.
- Ordinance No. 13-09 (Uncodified) - Amendment to Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map Amendment; Adopted by Town Council on August 26, 2013.
- Ordinance No. 13-18 (Uncodified) - Amendment to Comprehensive Plan - Addition of Transit Oriented Development Land Use; Adopted by Town Council on December 9, 2013.
- Ordinance No. 14-06 (Uncodified) - Amendment to Comprehensive Plan - Groundwater Overlay Map Amendment; Adopted by Town Council on May 5, 2014.
- Ordinance No. 14-13 (Uncodified) - Amendment to Comprehensive Plan - Amend text, Water Service Area and Future Land Use Map related to Rural Gateway and Compact Village District; Adopted by Town Council on June 23, 2014.
- Ordinance No. 14-14 (Uncodified) - Amendment to Comprehensive Plan - Amend text, Community Services and Facilities Map, and incorporate Village Centers Map; Adopted by Town Council on June 23, 2014.
- Ordinance 16-03 - (Uncodified) - Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan - Establishment of Redevelopment Agency; Adopted by Town Council on March 14, 2016.

# RELEVANT PLANS

The re-write of the comprehensive plan used and relied on data and information presented in the following plans and reports. Copies of all documents are available in the Town of North Kingstown Department of Planning located at 55 Brown Street, North Kingstown RI 02852. The department can be contacted by phone at 401-268-1571 or email at: [bgagnonglasberg@northkingstown.org](mailto:bgagnonglasberg@northkingstown.org)

- **Water Supply System Management Plan- Executive Summary**; Sept. 18, 2015; Author/Publisher: Town of North Kingstown Depts. of Planning and Water Supply, 55 Brown St., North Kingstown, RI 02852, 401-268-1573, [slicardi@northkingstown.org](mailto:slicardi@northkingstown.org)
- **Adaptation to Natural Hazards and Climate Change in North Kingstown, RI**; Aug. 1, 2015; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: URI Coastal Resources Center, Rhode Island Sea Grant College Program with the University of RI Environmental Data Center, University of RI Graduate School of Oceanography, South Ferry Rd., Narragansett, RI 02882, 401-874-6800, <http://www.crc.uri.edu/> and <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/>.
- **Multimodal Transportation Safety and Efficiency Assessment**; March 1, 2015; Author/Publisher: Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., 1 Cedar St., Suite 400, Providence, Rhode Island 02903, 401-272-8100, <https://www.vhb.com/>.
- **North Kingstown Community Market Study**; June 9, 2014; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: 4WARD PLANNING, 100 Park Ave., 16th Floor, New York, NY 10017, 646-383-3611, <http://landuselearning.com/>.
- **Wickford Junction TDR Assessment: Phase I Background and Market Analysis**; Oct. 15, 2013; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: 4WARD PLANNING, 100 Park Ave., 16th Floor, New York, NY 10017, 646-383-3611, <http://landuselearning.com/>.
- **Transfer of Development Rights and Identification of Village Centers Final Report**; Aug. 1, 2012; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: Horsley Witten Group, 370 Ives St., Providence, RI, 508-833-6600, [www.horsleywitten.com](http://www.horsleywitten.com).
- **Transfer of Development Rights and Identification of Village Centers Interim Report to Town Council**; Jan. 13, 2012; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: Horsley Witten Group, 370 Ives St., Providence, RI, 508-833-6600, [www.horsleywitten.com](http://www.horsleywitten.com).
- **Transfer of Development Rights and Identification of Village Centers Phase 1 Assessment**; March 4, 2011; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: Horsley Witten Group, 370 Ives St., Providence, RI, 508-833-6600, [www.horsleywitten.com](http://www.horsleywitten.com).
- **Healthy Places by Design North Kingstown**; May, 15, 2012; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: Horsley Witten Group, 370 Ives St., Providence, RI, 508-833-6600, [www.horsleywitten.com](http://www.horsleywitten.com).
- **Quonset Business Park Master Land Use And Development Plan**; Oct. 2008, Rev. April 2012; Author/Publisher: Maguire Group Inc Architects/Engineers/Planners, 225 Chapman St., Providence, RI, 401-272-6000, <http://www.cdrmaguire.com/>. Available from: Quonset Development Corporation, 95 Cripe St., North Kingstown, RI 02852, 401-295-0044, [ktrapani@quonset.com](mailto:ktrapani@quonset.com)
- **Wastewater Facilities Plan for the Town of North Kingstown**; Nov. 31, 2011; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: James J. Geremia & Associates, Inc, 272 West Exchange St., Suite 201, Providence, RI 02903, 401-454-7000, [jim@geremiaengineering.com](mailto:jim@geremiaengineering.com)
- **Mapping Assets Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise Building Blocks for Climate Change Adaptation: Tools for Community Assessment and Planning**; May 1, 2011; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: URI Coastal Resources Center, Rhode Island Sea Grant College Program with the University of RI Environmental Data Center, University of RI Graduate School of Oceanography, South Ferry Rd., Narragansett, RI 02882, 401-874-6800, <http://www.crc.uri.edu/> and <http://seagrant.gso.uri.edu/>.
- **Sawmill Pond Watershed Assessment**; April 1, 2010; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: Horsley Witten Group, 370 Ives St., Providence, RI, 508-833-6600, [www.horsleywitten.com](http://www.horsleywitten.com).

# PLAN COMPONENTS

- **Harbor Management Plan and Harbor Ordinances**; Oct. 20, 2008; Author/Publisher: Town of North Kingstown Harbor Management Commission, 8166 Post Rd., North Kingstown, RI 02852, 401-294-3331 x8255, [harbormaster@northkingstown.org](mailto:harbormaster@northkingstown.org)
- **Town of North Kingstown Comprehensive Plan Housing Element Update As Modified Affordable Housing Plan**; Nov. 22, 2004, Amended June 27, 2005; Author/Publisher: BC Stewart & Associates/Bay Area Economics, 2 Rolling Oaks Dr., Pocasset, MA 02559, 508-564-4170, <http://www.bcstewart-associates.org>.
- **Strategy for Reducing Risks from Natural Hazards in North Kingstown, RI - A Multi-Hazard Mitigation Strategy**; June 13, 2005; Author/Publisher: Town of North Kingstown Dept. of Planning, 55 Brown St., North Kingstown, RI 02852, 401-268-1573, [mharrington@northkingstown.org](mailto:mharrington@northkingstown.org)
- **Post Road Corridor Plan**; May 1, 2005; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: The Cecil Group, Inc. with Edwards and Kelcey, 170 Milk St., Suite 5, Boston, MA 02109-3438, 617-426-5050, <http://www.cecilgroup.com>.
- **Allen Harbor Calf Pasture Point Master Plan**; Sept. 1, 2000; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: The Cecil Group, Inc. with Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglass, Inc., 170 Milk St., Suite 5, Boston, MA 02109-3438, 617-426-5050, <http://www.cecilgroup.com>.
- **Wickford Village Plan**; May 1, 1998; 1st edition; Author/Publisher: Wickford Village Plan Advisory Committee and Town of North Kingstown Dept. of Planning, 55 Brown St., North Kingstown, RI 02852, 401-268-1571, [bgagnonglasberg@northkingstown.org](mailto:bgagnonglasberg@northkingstown.org)
- **North Kingstown Groundwater Protection Plan**; Oct. 1, 1991; Author/Publisher: Town of North Kingstown Depts. of Planning and Water Supply with the Groundwater Committee, 55 Brown St., North Kingstown, RI 02852, 401-268-1573, [slicardi@northkingstown.org](mailto:slicardi@northkingstown.org)

The organization and format of this update is designed to be streamlined and user-friendly.

**Chapter II. Overview of North Kingstown** offers a brief overview of North Kingstown's historical context and key demographic trends.

**Chapter III. Planning Process** details the process, community engagement, and key public input that resulted from the process.

**Chapter IV. Plan Elements** contains the Vision, Overview, and eight topic areas that cover the elements required by the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and together comprise the Comprehensive Plan.

The **Appendix** which is provided under separate cover contains additional data as required by the Rhode Island State Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual and data collected through the public input process.

The plan can be printed or viewed in full or broken into standalone segments. Chapters I, II, III, and the Vision and Overview sections of Chapter IV can serve as a summary of the Comprehensive Plan. Each plan element within Chapter IV can be pulled out as a self-contained, standalone section and includes key issues, goals, policies, and actions for implementation for that element.









## ii. overview of North Kingstown

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

North Kingstown's history can be traced back to the 1630s when Roger Williams established a temporary trading post near Cocumscussoc along major thoroughfares of the Narragansett People. Richard Smith later joined him and over time amassed large land holdings in what was known as "Narragansett Country."

In 1674, Kings Towne was founded by the colonial government and included the present day towns of North Kingstown, South Kingstown, Exeter, and Narragansett. Wickford was platted in 1709 and as the settlement rapidly expanded it was divided into North and South Kingstown in 1722.

In the 18th century North Kingstown was an agricultural community made up primarily of small to medium sized family farms. Wickford was a thriving seaport that grew to rival Newport.

In the 19th century, the textile industry took advantage of North Kingstown's rivers and streams and mill villages sprung up around the Hunt,

Annaquatucket, and Pettaquamscutt River systems. These included Lafayette, Hamilton, Belleville, Davisville, Annaquatucket, Shady Lea, and Silver Springs. Rail and trolley lines further propelled North Kingstown's industry with the Providence and Stonington Railroad, Newport & Wickford Railway & Steamship Line, and Sea View Trolley opening in the mid- to late-1800s.

By the 20th century, the textile industry began fading with most closing down in the 1930s. The next chapter of North Kingstown's economic growth came with the construction of the Quonset/Davisville military complex in 1938, with the Quonset Point Naval Air Station and Navy Construction Battalion Center at Davisville established in 1941-1942.

Between the 1930s and 1950s, summer resort communities sprouted up in Saunderstown, Mount View, Shore Acres, Plum Beach, and Barber Heights. By mid-century, North Kingstown had shifted to a mainly residential community.



Figure 1. Timeline of North Kingstown

The Quonset Point Naval Air Station was established as part of the Lend-Lease Act of 1941, shortly before the US entered World War II. It served as the major northeastern naval base during the war and subsequent years. During its heyday Quonset's workforce, combined with that of the adjacent Davisville Construction Battalion Center, was the largest in the state of Rhode Island.

The Navy established the Construction Battalion Center at Davisville (N.C.B.C. Davisville) less than a year after Quonset was completed. The Davisville area of Quonset used to be home to the thriving, 370-acre Romano Farm and Vineyards. Davisville would become the birthplace of the 'Seabees' - a portion of service people in the U.S. Navy tasked with building bases, creating roadways and airstrips and numerous other construction projects during conflicts dating back to World War II. It was the Davisville Seabees and their innovative problem solving skills that led to the creation of what is now known as the Quonset hut.

During the Second World War, Quonset was involved in the development of a naval night fighter aircraft.

After the war, Quonset Point saw depletion in ships on the base. It then went on to become a Naval Air Rework Facility. Like other WWII-era military installations across the country, Quonset Point fell victim to military budget cuts during the Nixon years and the Quonset base was decommissioned on June 28, 1974. The Navy declared most of Quonset Point surplus to its needs and the land and buildings were offered to the State of Rhode Island and North Kingstown for civilian use.

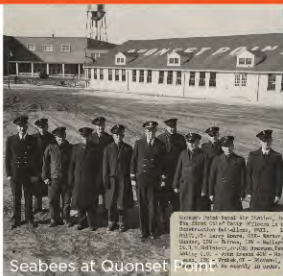
By the 1970's, activity gradually tapered off as the military's strategic focus shifted toward the Pacific Ocean. By the 1980s, Davisville's facilities had been stripped back to a skeleton crew and many of its buildings were sealed. Davisville was selected for closure during the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC 1991) program and operational closure occurred on April 1, 1994.

Following their closures, the land at Quonset and Davisville was managed and developed by various state entities until the Quonset Development Corporation (QDC) was created by the Rhode Island General Assembly effective on January 1, 2005. ([www.quonset.com/about-the-park/history-of-quonset](http://www.quonset.com/about-the-park/history-of-quonset))

**Quonset/Davisville military complex established**

*Great Hurricane of 1938*

1938

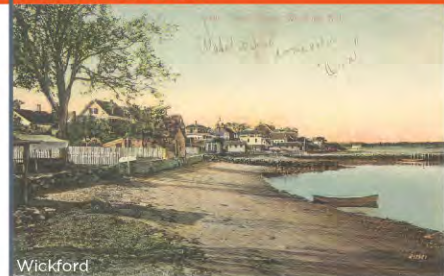


1941-1942

**Quonset Point Naval Air Station and Navy Construction Battalion Center at Davisville established**

*Summer resort communities grow and North Kingstown shifts to **mainly residential community***

1930s to 50s



*Quonset Point Naval Air Station decommissioned*

1974



1994

*Navy Construction Battalion Center at Davisville closed*

**Quonset Development Corporation created**

2005



# KEY DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

## North Kingstown is in a period of demographic stability

North Kingstown, which has historically been through tremendous population fluctuations, has experienced a period of population stability since 2000. Focusing in on the most recent decade, North Kingstown and most of its neighboring communities have experienced slight population declines similar to the statewide growth trend, while Warwick and Providence have changed course from decline to growth.

Rhode Island is one of the slowest growing states in the country. Changing little since 1970, it has grown only 0.4% since 2010. Most growth since 2000 has been in rural and suburban areas of the state.<sup>3</sup>

The Rhode Island Statewide Planning program projects a 0.3% annual growth rate in North Kingstown over the next 20 years, reaching a population of 28,390 by 2035.<sup>3</sup>

## Household composition has been changing

North Kingstown follows regional and national trends of non-family household growth. Between 2010 and 2017<sup>4</sup>, growth has been in households of individuals living alone and families without children. In 2010, 63% were families with no children versus 68% in 2017. The growth rate is highest among empty nesters and young workers, while families with children have declined.<sup>1, 2</sup>

This is in line with Rhode Island trends. The state is getting older and projections show the Rhode Island working-age population will shrink an estimated 6% between 2010 and 2040.<sup>3</sup>

The population of North Kingstown is 93% white, a slight decline from 94% in 2010. There has been consistent representation from black, Asian and hispanic populations between 2010-2017<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> US Census; <sup>2</sup> 2013 American Community Survey (ACS); <sup>3</sup> RI Statewide Planning; <sup>4</sup>US Census ACS 2013-2017 Estimates<sup>5</sup>US Census 2018 Estimates.

Figure 2. Population change in North Kingstown, 1940-2018 <sup>1, 5</sup>

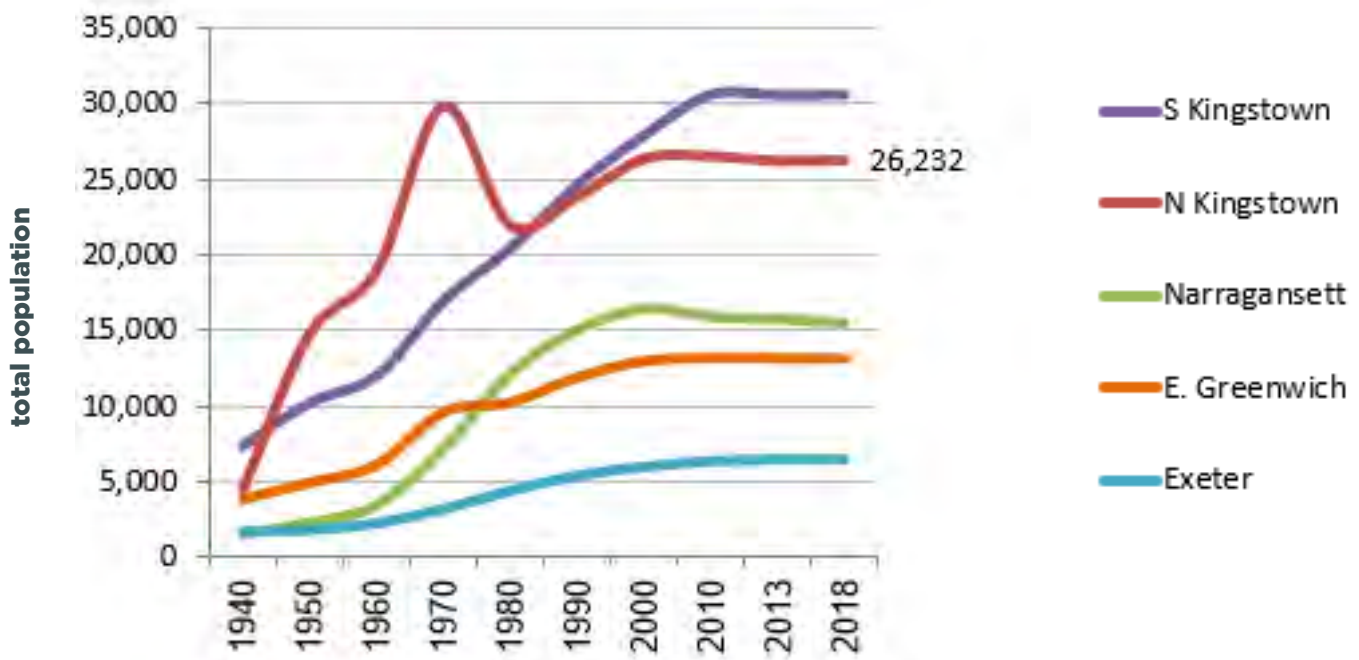
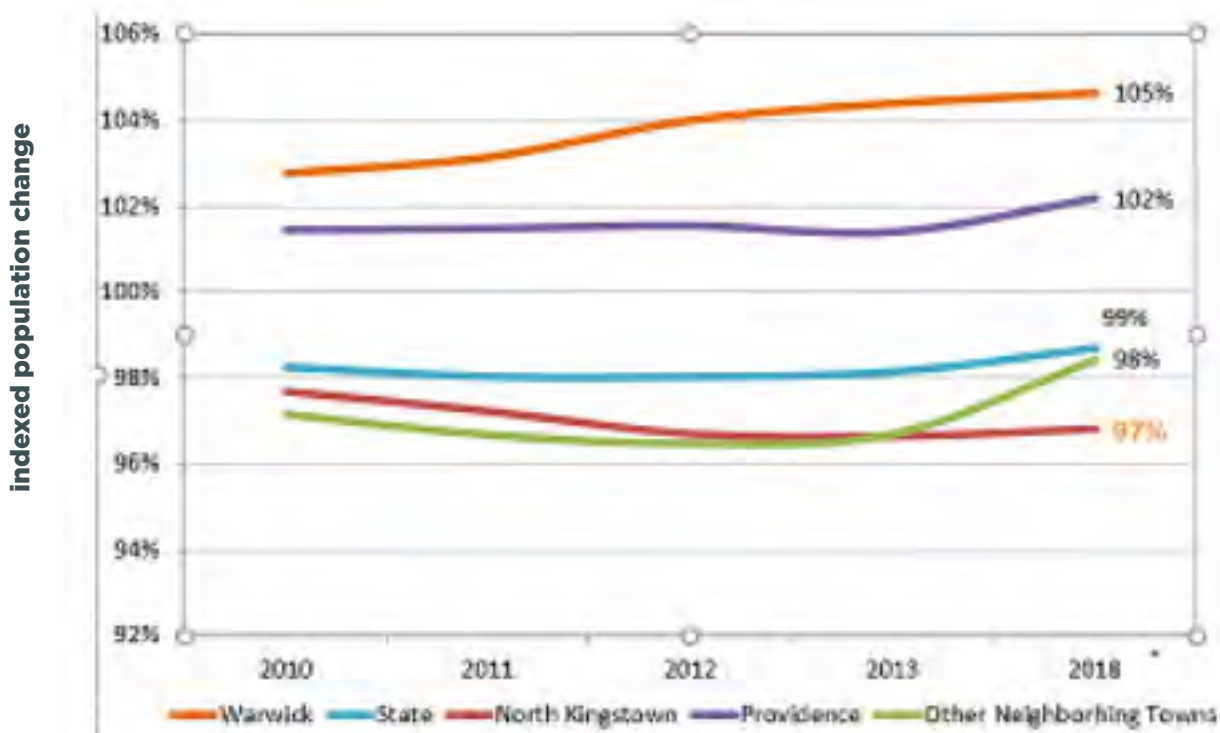


Figure 3. Indexed population change, 2005-2018 <sup>2, 3, 5</sup>



**North Kingstown  
has an educated  
population**

North Kingstown ranks 7th among the state's 39 cities and towns in attainment of bachelor's degree or higher. 51.5%<sup>4</sup> of North Kingstown adults age 25 or older have a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to the statewide rate of 33%<sup>7</sup>, while 35%<sup>7</sup> have a high school diploma but no Bachelor's degree, and 4.4%<sup>7</sup> have less than high school. The high school graduation rate was 93%.

**Incomes have  
been growing  
but child  
poverty has also  
increased**

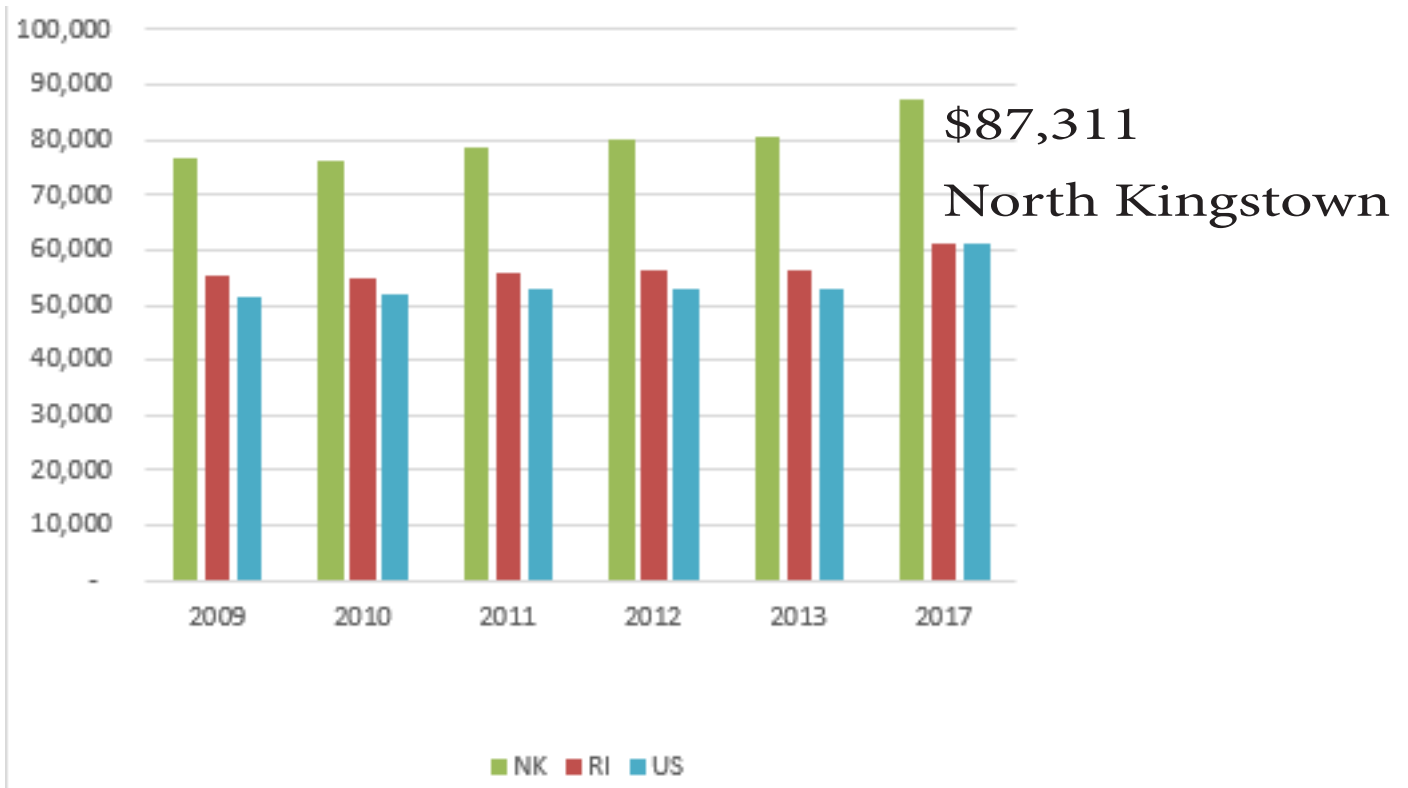
North Kingstown residents have above average household incomes. The income distribution is skewed toward upper income ranges, but not to the same extent as the adjacent four towns (East Greenwich, Exeter, Narragansett, and South Kingstown). The trend has been strong seeing growth in median household income, up 8.5% since 2010. Median income in North Kingstown was 130% of the statewide median in 2017<sup>7</sup>.

While many families in North Kingstown earn more than \$100,000 per year, the census estimates that 11%<sup>6</sup> of children live in households below the poverty line in 2013 up from 9.7% in 2000. These estimates give North Kingstown a higher child poverty rate than all the surrounding towns and Warwick (although far below the statewide 17%)<sup>6</sup>. In contrast, poverty rates for adults and seniors are estimated at 6% and changed only slightly in the same period.<sup>1, 2</sup>

The unemployment rate, 3.2% in 2018,<sup>5</sup> in North Kingstown has stayed very close to the US average during the latest recession and recovery, with elevated unemployment reaching a peak at 9.2% in 2010. Rhode Island unemployment was 4.1% for 2018.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> US Census, 2013 ACS; <sup>2</sup> 2009 and 2013 ACS; <sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics; <sup>4</sup>US Census Population Estimates July 2018; <sup>5</sup>RI Department of Labor and Training 2018; <sup>6</sup> RI Kids Count 2018; <sup>7</sup> US Census ACS 5-year estimate 2013-2017.

Figure 4. Median household income, 2009-2017 <sup>2,7</sup>



Distribution of Housholds by Median Income  
2013-2017 ACS 5-year Estimates

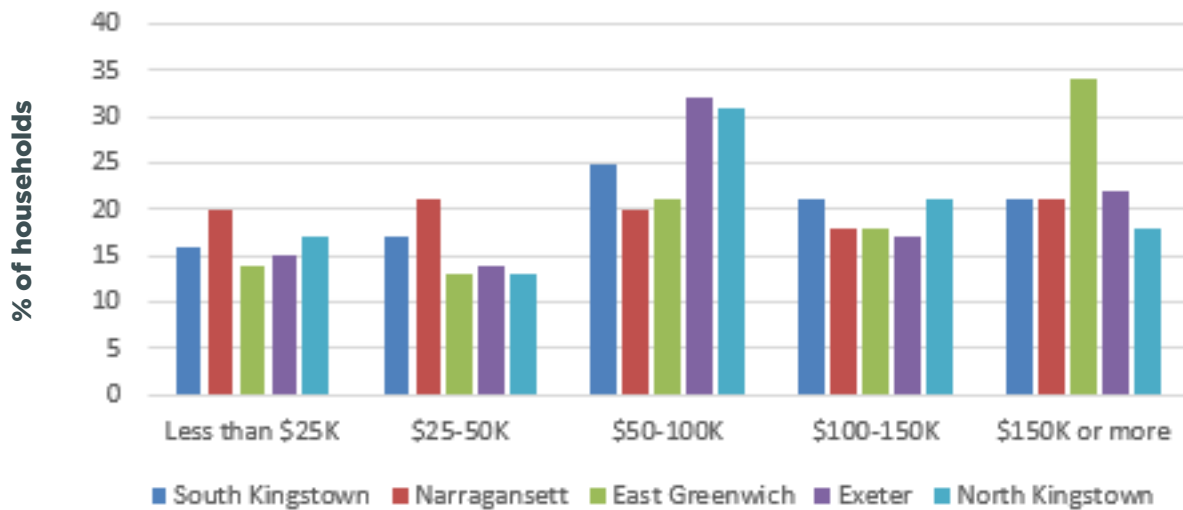


Figure 5. Distribution of households by median income, 2017 <sup>27</sup>







### iii. planning process

# PLANNING PHASES

The comprehensive planning process kicked off in April 2015 and was overseen by the Steering Committee and consisted of three phases:

- a. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS which combined data collection and analysis of census research and GIS data with listening and learning from the community through interviews, neighborhood tours, collaborative mapping, public forums, and a resident survey.
- b. DEVELOPING A VISION AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS in response to the research findings and community input with review and feedback through the steering committee, stakeholder functional groups, and public forums.
- c. DEVELOPING THE PLAN by refining the recommendations based on input from the steering committee and community, and bringing together the analysis, key public input, recommendations and implementation into a plan document.



Figure 6. Planning process schedule

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## STEERING COMMITTEE

A steering committee composed of local residents, community leaders, public officials, and institutional and business representatives was appointed by the Town Council to guide the project. The steering committee convened at key points in the process:

- April 9, 2015 kick off,
- June 10, 2015 - discuss interview themes and community participation plan,
- July 15, 2015 - review initial research findings and preview public kick off,
- September 17, 2015 - review full research and analysis to be discussed with functional groups,
- October 14, 2015 - review functional group findings,
- November 23, 2015 - review draft goals and brainstorm potential policies and actions,
- February 10, 2016 - review draft goals, policies and actions.

## RESIDENT SURVEY

662 residents from across the town responded to a survey about their perceptions and concerns. The survey was available both in print and online formats.

## INTERVIEWS

24 confidential interviews were conducted with a sample of residents, business owners, service providers, and public officials.

## AREA TOURS

Four area tours were conducted by local residents and stakeholders and were open to the public.

- Wickford Village
- Post Road south of 403

- Davisville
- Wickford Junction and Route 2/102

The consultant team, Planning Department and members of the Steering Committee were also given a tour of the Quonset Business Park.

## FUNCTIONAL GROUPS

Four stakeholder functional groups were formed by Town Council to discuss the following topic areas:

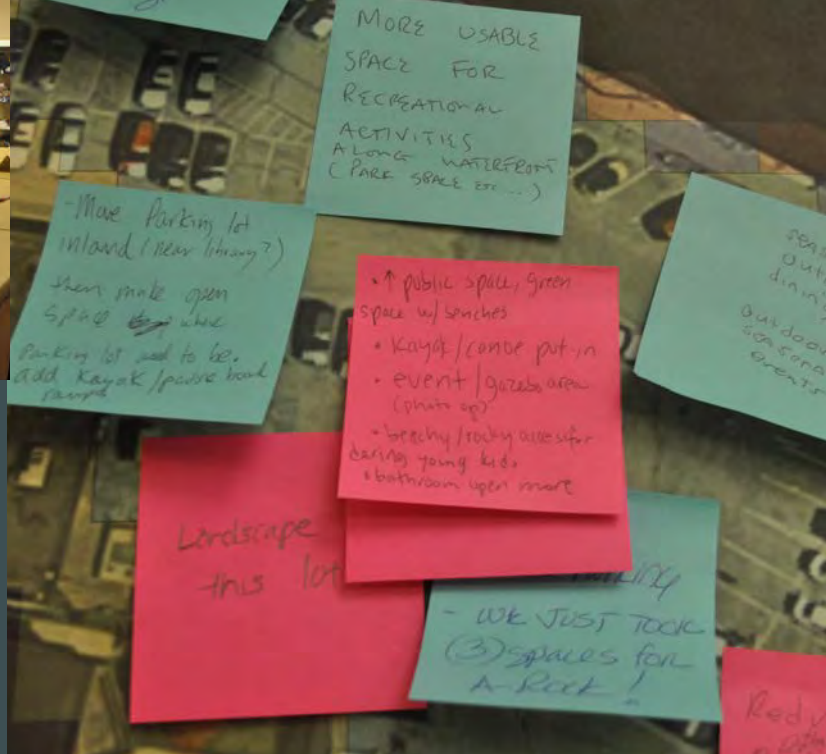
- Land use/transportation/housing
- Economic development
- Natural/cultural/open space/conservation/recreation
- Community facilities/services

Each functional group met twice: once in September to review the research and analysis findings and discuss key issues, and again in December to review the draft goals and brainstorm potential policies and actions.

## PUBLIC FORUMS

Three public forums were held at the Beechwood House and online presentations and activities were available for those who could not attend the forums:

- June 11, 2015 public kick off,
- October 15, 2015 - review key research and analysis findings and develop vision and ideas for the future,
- February 11, 2016 - review draft goals and recommendations and weigh in on prioritization and implementation.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



## RESIDENT SURVEY

A resident survey was conducted over June and July of 2015 with questions carried over from the 2008 Comprehensive Plan survey to track what has stayed the same and what has changed in public opinion. It was not a stratified random survey but used the same methodology as the 2008 survey whereby the survey was available online and also on paper at the Town Hall, Town Hall Annex, Senior Center, and Library.

A total of 662 people completed the survey in 2015 compared to 385 people for the 2008 comprehensive plan. The breakdown of resident neighborhoods was comparable to the 2008 survey and covered a broad range of North Kingstown neighborhoods.

Key results from the resident survey follow. For full results, please see the Appendix.

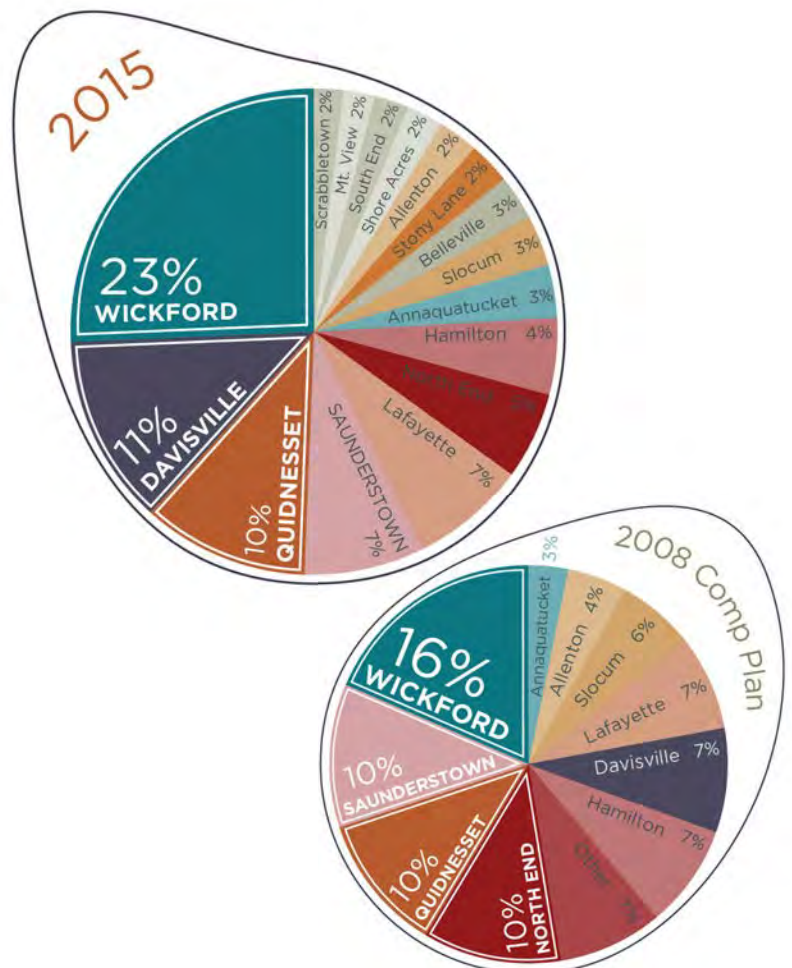
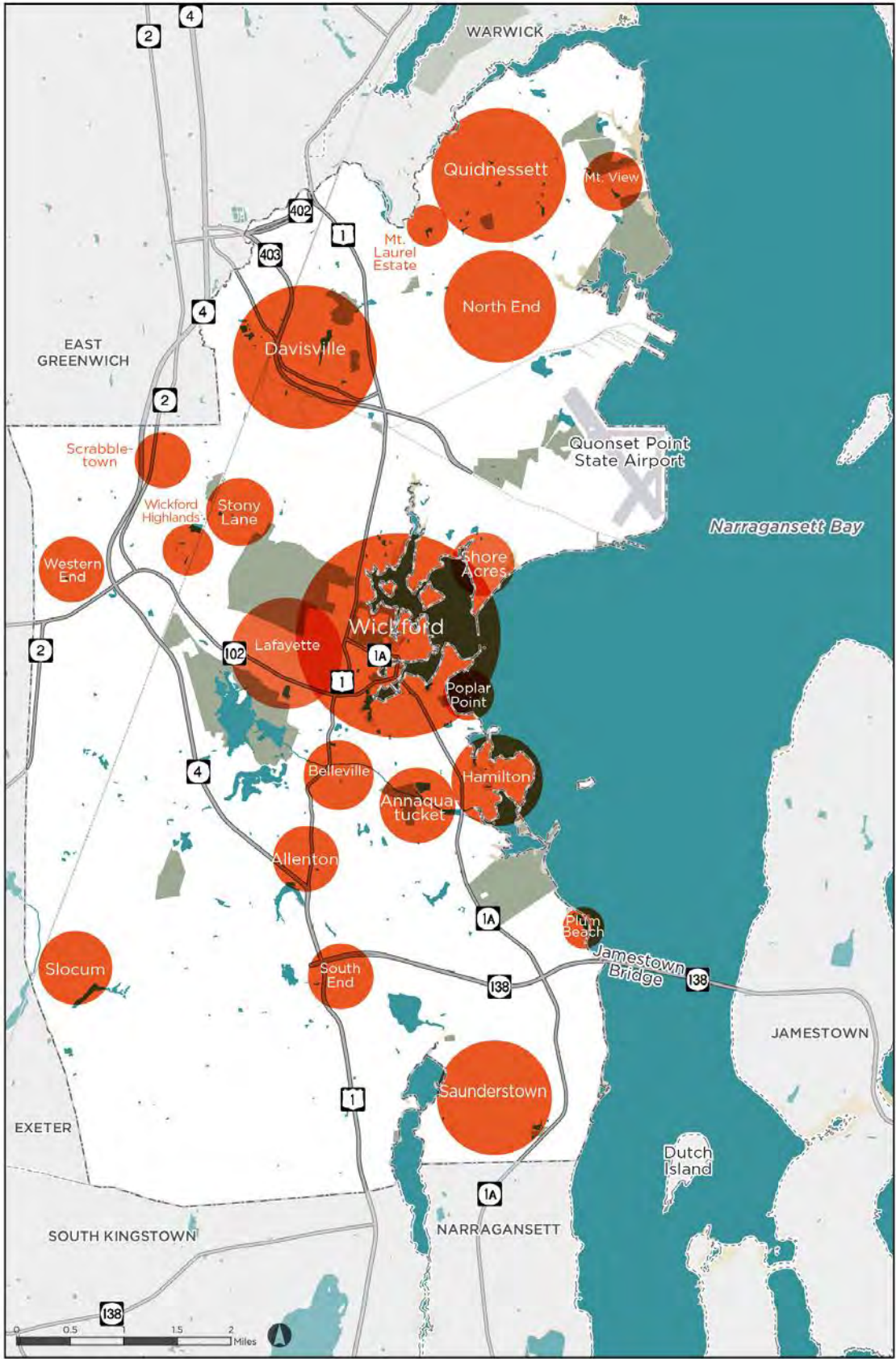


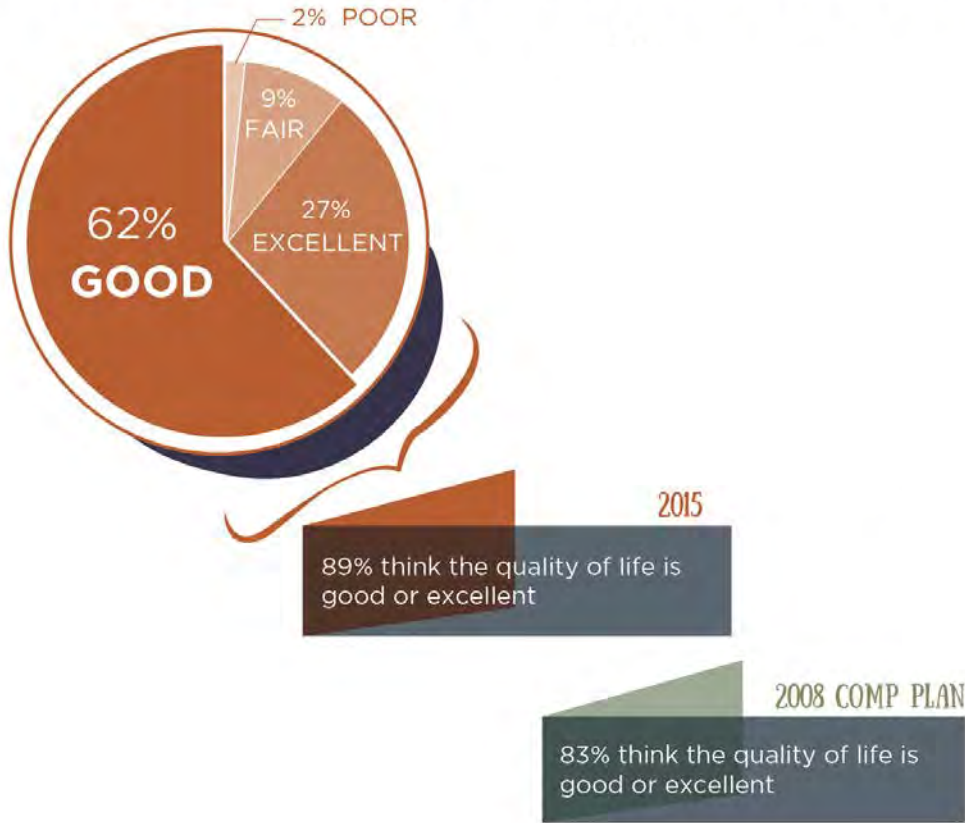
Figure 7. Breakdown of 2008 and 2015 survey participant neighborhoods



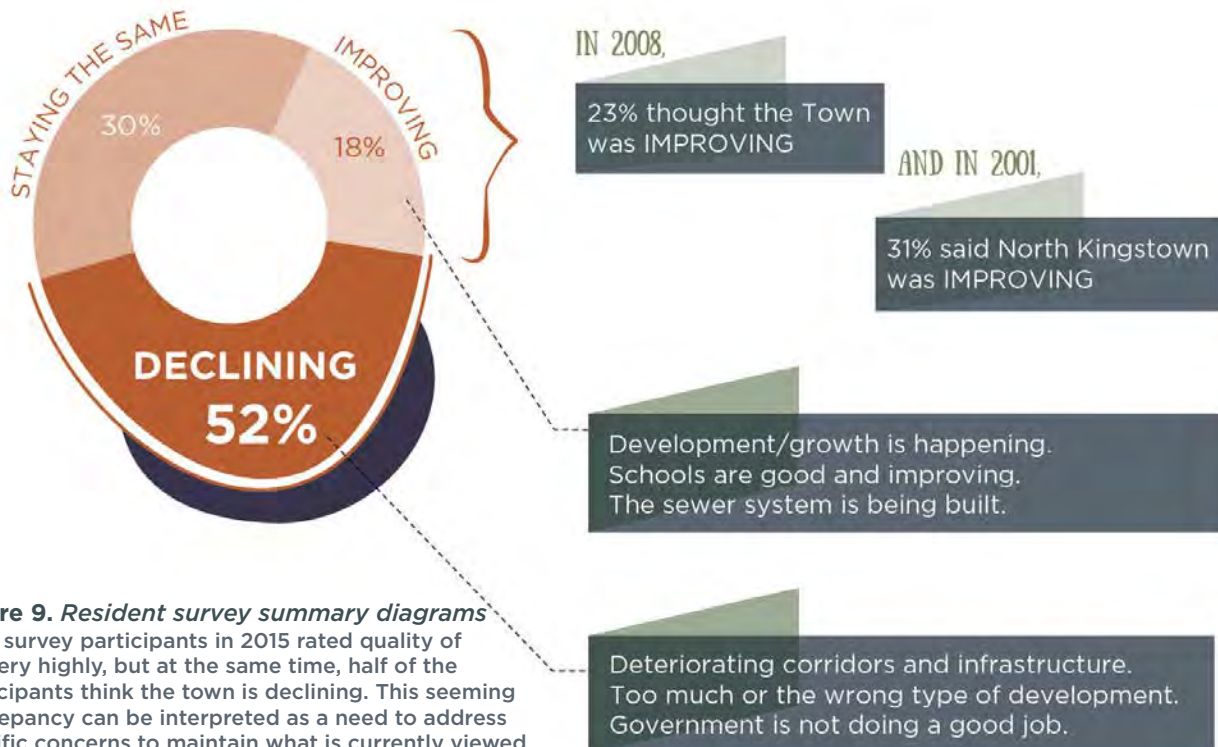
**Figure 8. Map and summary of resident survey participants**

Survey participants came from all over the town. The size of the circle on the map corresponds to the number of participants in each locale.

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE QUALITY OF LIFE?



## DO YOU THINK NORTH KINGSTOWN IS...

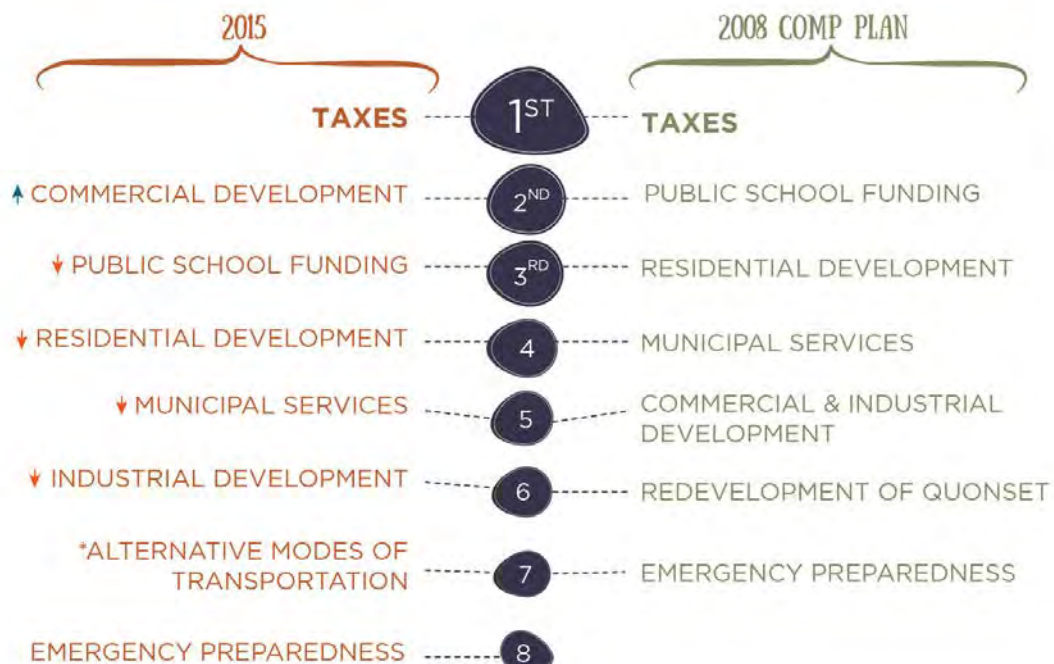


**Figure 9. Resident survey summary diagrams**  
 Most survey participants in 2015 rated quality of life very highly, but at the same time, half of the participants think the town is declining. This seeming discrepancy can be interpreted as a need to address specific concerns to maintain what is currently viewed as a high quality of life.

## WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST?



## WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR CONCERNS?





# WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTION TO MANAGE LAND USE?



NOTE:  
Blue UP arrows indicate higher ranking in 2015 than 2008

Red DOWN arrows indicate lower ranking in 2015 than 2008

## COLLABORATIVE MAP

A large-scale map was presented at the public kick-off meeting in July 2015 and participants were asked to show us three places on the map: where they lived, a hidden gem, and a place that needs investment. The map was also installed at the Town Hall Annex and a version was available on-line for residents to continue populating the map. Post Road and Wickford village stand out as places where residents would like to see investment.

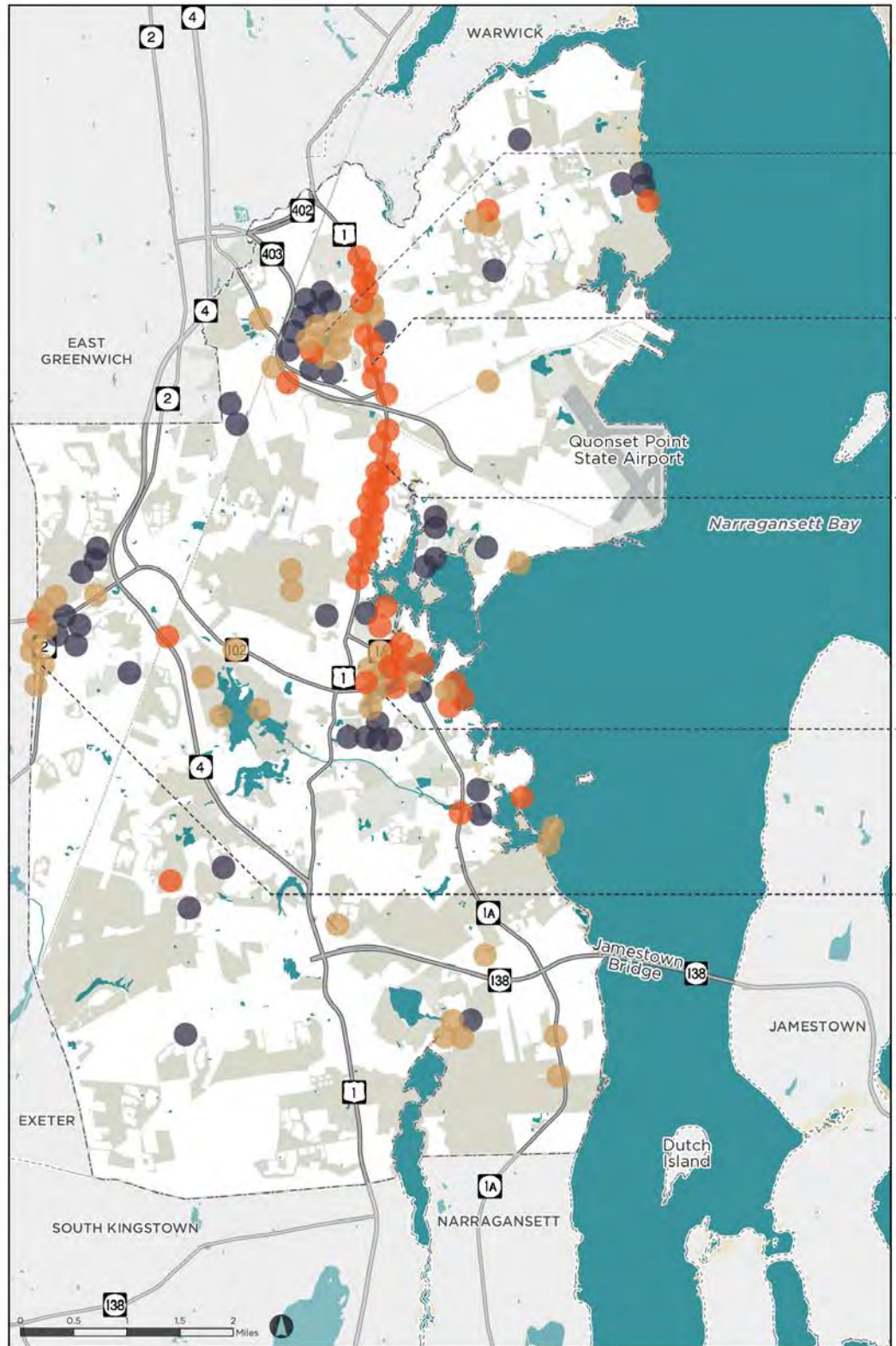


Figure 10. Collaborative map comments.

“ Beautiful water feature in the center of a dense neighborhood. Just needs to be cleaned and polished. ”

“ Infill and support existing development rather than neglecting and sprawling. ”

“ Make this area bike friendly, pedestrian friendly, and connected. ”

“ Downtown is the gem that draws people here, but there is little to do there. That has to change. ”

“ Scenic residential and farm land. ”

“ I would like to see the rural character protected. ”

DAVISVILLE  
10

POST ROAD  
32

WICKFORD  
18

RT. 2 & 102  
9

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

- Where participants live
- A hidden gem
- A place the town should invest in



BEACH ROSE CAFÉ

SPRING



iv. plan elements

improved + SE  
expanded  
open space  
farmland  
QDC  
Wickford

Collection of  
connected  
villages support  
ed by strong  
Commercial  
Areas

STICKY NOTE FOR TOMORROW

TOWN  
LEADER

Diverse

Bike  
Trail to  
Village  
Quonset

OUTDOORSY

Making  
things happen  
village mixed  
commercial

A TOWN  
THAT  
FEELS +  
LOOKS  
DIFFERENT

Walkable  
Community  
with  
Restaurants  
Things like EG

Quaint  
Village

SHORELINE  
CONNECTED  
AVAILABLE

Diverse  
Arts  
Culture  
Wickford  
charm  
villages  
Attracts character  
Destination

interconnected  
neighborhoods  
commercial  
areas

destination  
location

Resilient  
to climate chg  
May require  
making structures

MAINTAIN  
CHARACTER  
&  
QUALITY

Post restaurants  
Quonset development  
commercial  
connected

LESS EXPENSIVE  
FISCAL  
BETTER Arts  
Support

Thoughtful  
about  
development

Environmentally  
Progressive

Bike trail  
multimodal transportation  
Walkable

Reimagining of Post Rd  
recognizing changed demo-  
graphics, needs  
Multimodal Transportation  
Improvements

Supportive  
Community  
Destination  
location

Able to set  
vision + zoning  
and stick with  
it

Shoreline  
nature  
trees  
open space  
farmland  
parks  
Flood resistant  
Resilient  
climate

FISCALLY  
RESPONSIBLE

Bike trail to  
lower  
bike  
Quonset

AS MUCH  
AS POSSIBLE

More trees  
city

Responses to the public kick off activity: "What do you want North Kingstown to be TOMORROW?" and word cloud illustrating the most common responses - the larger the word the more times it was mentioned.

# VISION FOR THE FUTURE

North Kingstown is a great place to live, work and visit.

It is a growing economic hub and vibrant seaside community renowned for its scenic beauty and historic character.

The town promotes sustainable and resilient development to ensure all residents enjoy a high quality of life with excellent schools, parks, services and waterfront amenities, as well as convenient connections to local and regional destinations.

North Kingstown is...

## A VIBRANT TOWN

ELEMENT 1: Economic development

## A LIVABLE TOWN

ELEMENT 2: Housing and neighborhoods

## A CONNECTED TOWN

ELEMENT 3: Circulation

## A SUSTAINABLE TOWN

ELEMENT 4: Open space, recreation and the environment

## A HISTORIC TOWN

ELEMENT 5: Historic and cultural resources

## A CIVIC-MINDED TOWN

ELEMENT 6: Community services, facilities, and communication

## A RESILIENT TOWN

ELEMENT 7: Natural hazards and climate adaptation

## A FORWARD-THINKING TOWN

ELEMENT 8: Land use

# OVERVIEW

This chapter is divided into eight elements that cover the topic areas required by the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act and comprise the Comprehensive Plan. Each element consists of:

- the **community vision and goals** which present the aspirations for the future and provide guidance in taking steps to achieve it,
- an overview of **key issues**,
- **accomplishments** since the 2008 Comprehensive Plan,
- a summary of **key public input** from the resident survey, interviews, tours, functional groups, public forums, and online activities,
- **goals**, which are designed to help achieve the vision and provide a framework for organizing the policies,
- **policies**, which are statements that guide the town's decision makers, and
- **actions**, which are specific and measurable items for the Town to implement to fulfill the goals and vision and an **implementation program** that outlines the timeframe and partners responsible for implementation.

## **A VIBRANT TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 1: Economic development**

The economic development element speaks to residents' primary concerns about the revitalization of commercial areas and the continued growth of Quonset as a major job center. The plan aims to encourage local business growth and jobs to support a robust local economy that enhances residents' quality of life and supports town character. The plan addresses the need to advance regulatory change, infrastructure improvements, strategies for promoting businesses, and better connections between Quonset and local businesses and the town as a whole. This element is organized under the following key economic development goals:

- Position North Kingstown as a competitive economic hub and good place for business
- Leverage the success of Quonset as a jobs center for the benefit of the town as a whole
- Encourage the development and redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial areas
- Encourage place-specific, resource-based businesses, such as agriculture and marine-related industries, that enhance sense of place

## **A LIVABLE TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 2: Housing and neighborhoods**

The housing and neighborhoods element addresses the need for housing options that serve a diverse population. The plan's recommendations include strategies to help residents stay in town and encourage residential development that supports town character, preserves affordability, and contributes to sustainability and resiliency. This element is organized under the following key housing goals:

- Provide a range of housing choices
- Encourage residential development away from environmentally constrained and sensitive areas, and that reflects town character and supports walkable neighborhoods

## **A CONNECTED TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 3: Circulation**

The circulation element aims to ensure that all residents have access to safe and convenient transportation options including walking, biking and public transit. The plan encourages safe roadway design that incorporates Complete Streets concepts and enhanced alternative transportation options to better connect destinations in town, particularly Wickford Junction, Quonset, Wickford Village, and Post Road. This element is organized under the following key circulation goals:

- Design safer and more attractive roadways for all users
- Promote alternative transportation options for better local and regional connections
- Upgrade and maintain transportation infrastructure

## **A SUSTAINABLE TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 4: Open space, recreation and the environment**

The open space and environment element aims to protect the town's natural resources and open space, recognizing their economic, environmental, recreational and scenic value. The plan sets forth strategies to preserve open space, integrating recreation and resiliency where possible; create a connected open space network; conserve resources; and enhance the waterfront, the town's key natural asset, through better access and active uses. This element is organized under the following key open space and environment goals:

- Protect, preserve, and restore natural resources
- Promote sustainable water and energy measures to conserve resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Increase public awareness of conservation and sustainability
- Provide high quality recreation facilities and opportunities for all residents
- Enhance public access to active open space, recreation areas and the waterfront



## **A HISTORIC TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 5: Historic and cultural resources**

The historic and cultural resources element aims to strengthen the unique assets that contribute to town character and sense of place, provide socio-economic benefit and enhance residents' quality of life. This element is organized under the following key historic and cultural resources goals:

- Protect and promote the town's historic assets
- Promote and foster local arts programs

## **A CIVIC-MINDED TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 6: Community services, facilities, and communication**

The community services, facilities and communication element supports the provision of excellent services and encourages civic engagement. The plan includes strategies to support priority infrastructure improvements such as sewer installation; efficient and cost-effective services through resource sharing, consolidating town government, and long-range school planning; better communication through a range of tools including an updated town website; and strong civic engagement. This element is organized under the following key community services, facilities and communication goals:

- Ensure high quality services that provide for health, welfare, education, and public safety
- Maintain and upgrade town facilities to ensure access to and safe provision of services
- Share information effectively and expand civic engagement

## **A RESILIENT TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 7: Natural hazards and climate adaptation**

The natural hazards and climate adaptation element addresses current and future hazards to ensure the town is prepared to meet these challenges. The plan promotes resilience and adaptation measures to protect existing property, resources, and infrastructure, and minimize the exposure of future development to natural hazards and climate change, in particular sea level rise. This element is organized under the following key natural hazards and climate adaptation goal:

- Promote resilience and adaptation to natural hazards and a changing climate to protect lives, infrastructure, resources, and property

## **A FORWARD-THINKING TOWN**

### **ELEMENT 8: Land use**

The land use element espouses balanced growth that incorporates resilience and resource conservation to maintain our town character and enhance our quality of life. The plan encourages focused growth in sustainable patterns that contribute to connected neighborhoods and assets, protect natural resources, and support a strong economy. This element is organized under the following key land use goals:

- Preserve town character and focus growth in existing and designated growth areas that limit the need for new infrastructure; remove blight; preserve town character; preserve open space; provide access to jobs, housing, services and transportation
- Promote sustainable patterns of development that support walkable neighborhoods, thriving commercial areas, job growth, and access to natural assets

# PRIORITY GOALS AND ACTIONS

Over the course of the community engagement process, the following priorities emerged:

- commercial development that revitalizes Post Road
- sewer extensions
- focused growth
- better waterfront access and a more active Wickford waterfront
- streamlined regulations
- preparation for flooding and sea level rise

These are key results from the final public forum and online activity where participants were asked to weigh in on the plan’s goals and actions. For full results, please see the Appendix.

## DO YOU SUPPORT THE PLAN’S GOALS?



Figure 11. Priority goals and actions summary



Examples of Post Road development and redevelopment.

## HOW SHOULD WE COMMIT OUR LIMITED RESOURCES?

### TOP TEN ACTIONS

- 1 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Revitalize Post Road by addressing physical challenges ...
- 2 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Revitalize Post Road by addressing regulatory challenges ...
- 3 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Enhance Wickford as a destination ...
- 4 **CIRCULATION**  
Encourage Complete Streets design ...
- 5 **OPEN SPACE/ENVIRONMENT**  
Preserve open space for natural resource protection and climate adaptation ...
- 6 **HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES**  
Maintain inventory of extant historic structures and identify priorities for rehabilitation, redevelopment and historic designation.
- 7 **HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES**  
Promote town history and historic assets ...
- 8 **OPEN SPACE/ENVIRONMENT**  
Explore the creation of new recreation facilities ...
- 9 **HOUSING**  
Encourage the development of: transit-oriented, walkable housing, senior housing & workforce housing.
- 10 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
Support and promote small business ...

### BREAKDOWN OF ALL VOTES BY TOPIC AREAS\*

Economic Development	38%
Open Space/Environment	16%
Housing	11%
Historical/Cultural Resources	11%
Circulation	10%
Services	7%
Land use	7%

\* NOTE: Actions related to the topic of natural hazards and climate adaptation are folded into the other topic areas

over 50% of all votes



# A VIBRANT TOWN

A plan for ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

---

ELEMENT  
**1**

## VISION

We are a **vibrant** and **welcoming** town with a **robust** and **thriving** local economy.

North Kingstown will encourage local business growth and jobs to support a robust local economy that enhances our town character, improves residents' standard of living and quality of life, and expands the tax base, while ensuring future development and investments protect the environment and are resilient in the face of changing economic and environmental conditions.

---

## GOALS

1. Position North Kingstown as a competitive economic hub and good place for business
2. Leverage the success of Quonset as a jobs center for the benefit of the town as a whole
3. Encourage the development and redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial areas
4. Encourage place-specific, resource-based businesses, such as agriculture and marine-related industries, that enhance sense of place

# OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES

Job growth in North Kingstown has been one of Rhode Island’s economic success stories in the last decade. Over the same period, Rhode Island also experienced job gains since the low point in 2009.

North Kingstown’s economic strength comes from a high concentration of jobs in manufacturing accounting for 43% of jobs relative to the state with 10%. Recent trends show North Kingstown’s growth in some of these sectors slowing compared to the state particularly in accommodation and food services.

Despite its coastal recreation opportunities and historic Wickford Village, North Kingstown has an average to low concentration of jobs in the accommodation, restaurant, arts, entertainment, and recreation sectors, demonstrating a missed opportunity for potential growth.

Agriculture accounts for 1% of the jobs in North Kingstown by industry sector and has not been a high growth industry over the last decade. Between 2008-2018, there was a slight decline in the state, but in North Kingstown, the industry held steady and grew from 35 to 82 jobs. As a legacy industry with strong public support as it contributes to the traditional rural character of town, an exploration of new opportunities and emerging trends will be needed to breath new life into the industry.

The Town should encourage the revitalization of existing industrial and commercial locations in an environmentally sustainable manner that is compatible with nearby land uses. Existing commercial centers, particularly Wickford Village and Post Road, are in need of improvement. As there is limited market demand, however, a broader approach will be needed to generate activity and improve infrastructure to create the conditions to support revitalization.

A statewide sales tax exemption on original works of art is available.

**North Kingstown is a job center with over one-third of the jobs in the immediate region.**

North Kingstown has experienced **16% job growth** over the 10-year period between 2008 and 2018, gaining more jobs (more than 2400) than its neighbors combined (with an average of 115 gained across five adjacent communities).<sup>1</sup>

Figure 12. Job growth, 2008-2018 <sup>1</sup>

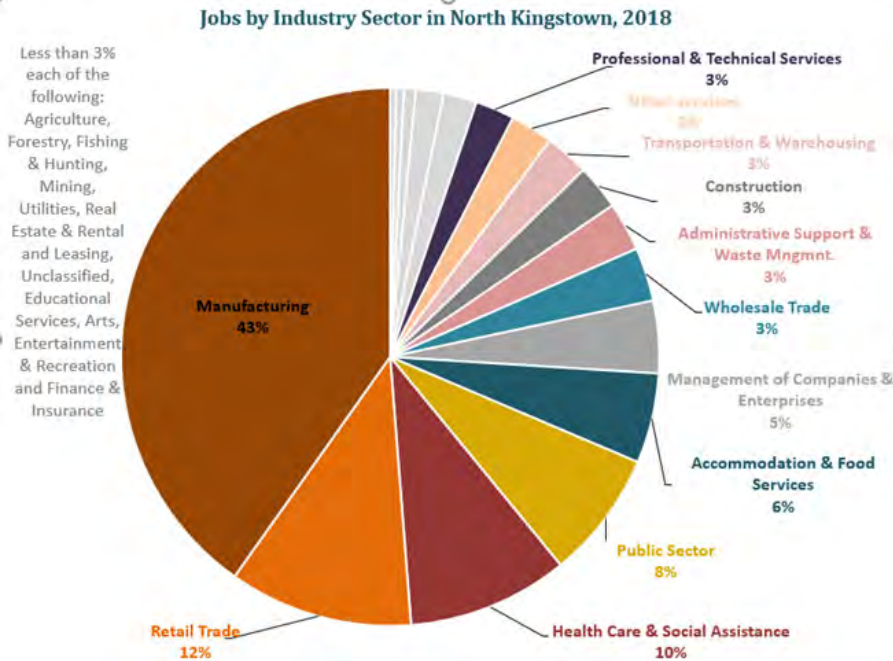


Figure 13. Total jobs, 2008-2018 <sup>1</sup>



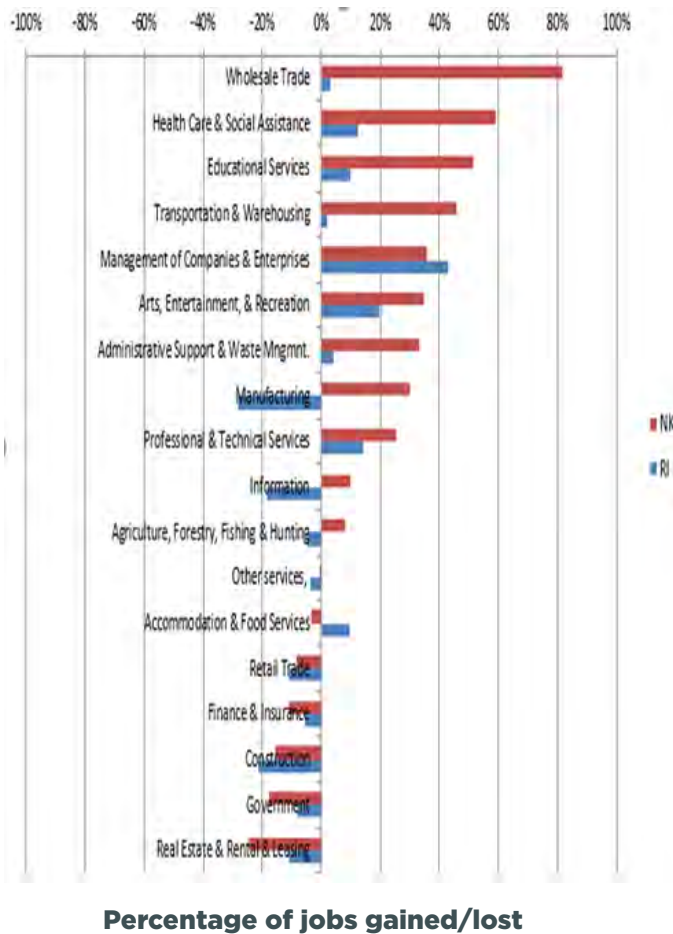
<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island Labor Market Information.

**Figure 14. Jobs by industry sector in North Kingstown 2018<sup>1</sup>**

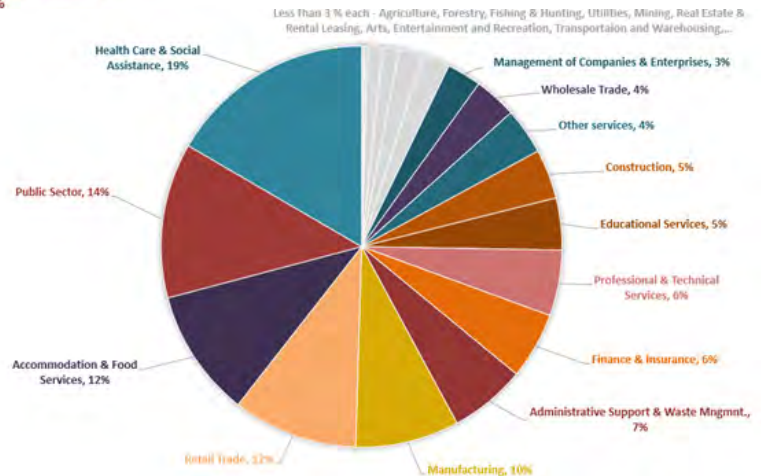


**Manufacturing is the top industry sector in North Kingstown and has generated the most job growth. Agriculture has also experienced job growth over the last decade.**

**Figure 16. Job change by industry sector in North Kingstown and Rhode Island, 2008-2018<sup>1</sup>**



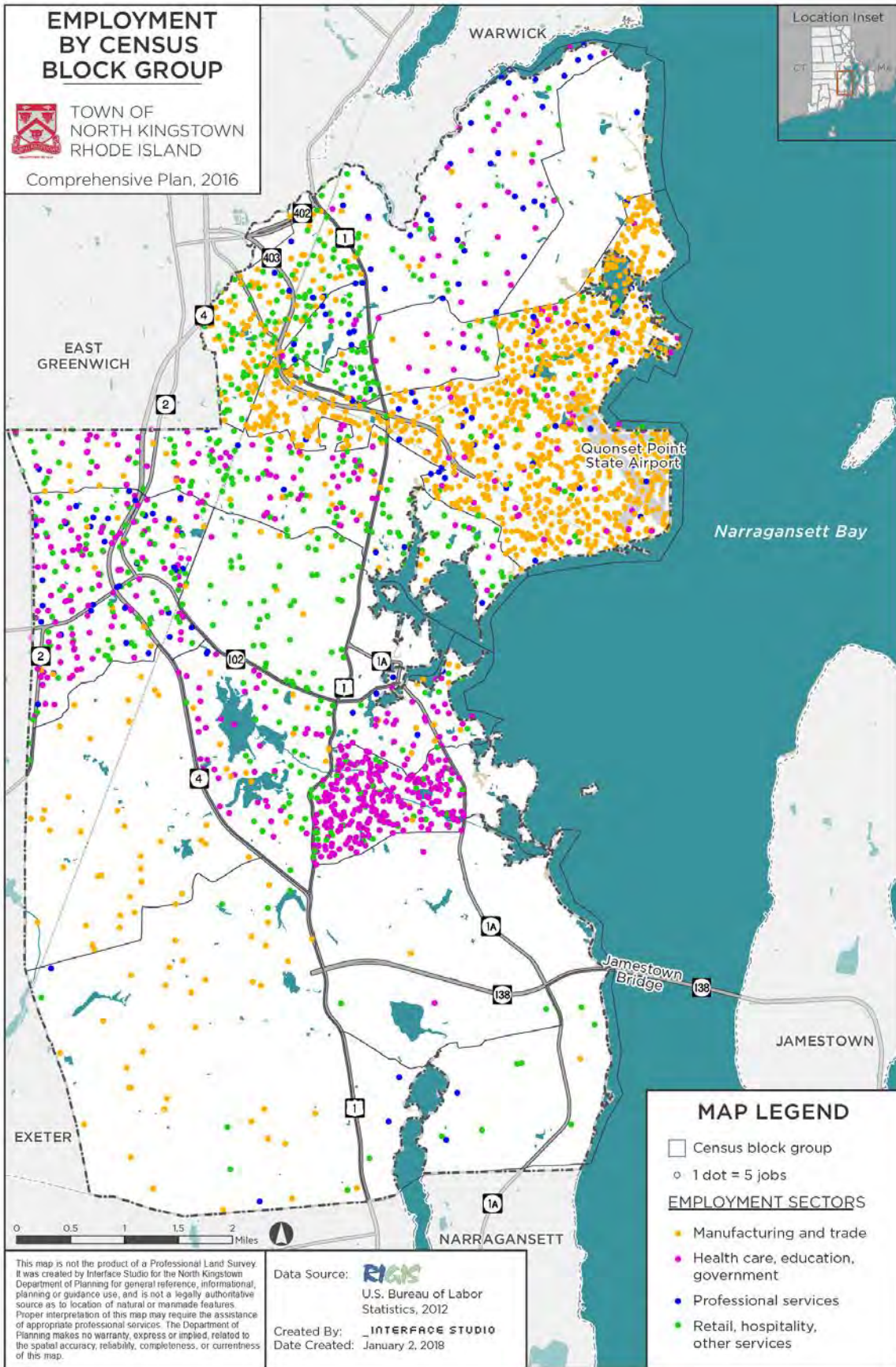
**Figure 15. Jobs by industry sector in Rhode Island, 2018<sup>1</sup>**



**Manufacturing** accounted for **43%** of the 16,172 private sector jobs in North Kingstown in 2018 and **a large majority** of the 2,414 private sector jobs created between 2008 and 2018 in North Kingstown.<sup>1</sup>

Between 2008 and 2018, North Kingstown's growth in **manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation and warehousing** greatly outpaced the state, but other sectors, particularly **construction, finance & insurance, real estate and rental leasing** and **accommodation & food services** lagged behind the state.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rhode Island Labor Market Information.



**Figure 17. Employment by census block group, 2012.**

This map shows where jobs are concentrated by census block group. The colors show 4 employment sectors. Most of the jobs in town are located in the central and north part of the town.



**Quonset Business Park and the Port of Davisville are major economic drivers for North Kingstown and the state of Rhode Island and the town's hub of jobs and industry.**

**Quonset** is home to **over 200 companies** and **over 10,000 jobs**, accounting for **two-thirds** of all North Kingstown jobs with **thousands** of additional jobs projected as companies such as Electric Boat expand.<sup>1</sup>

An estimated **1,100-1,200** North Kingstown residents are employed at Quonset.<sup>1</sup>

The **Port of Davisville** is one of the **top ten auto importers** in the country and the **only public port** in Rhode Island.<sup>1</sup>

**Manufacturing** and **wholesale trade** generated the greatest number of additional jobs between 2009-2014, comprising **77%** of the job growth during that period in North Kingstown.<sup>2</sup>

“With 10,000 people coming to work at Quonset, there has got to be a way to get them in the community.”

<sup>1</sup> Quonset Development Corporation; <sup>2</sup> Rhode Island Labor Market Information.

**Existing commercial centers need improvement and each has its distinct characteristics. However there is limited market opportunity.**

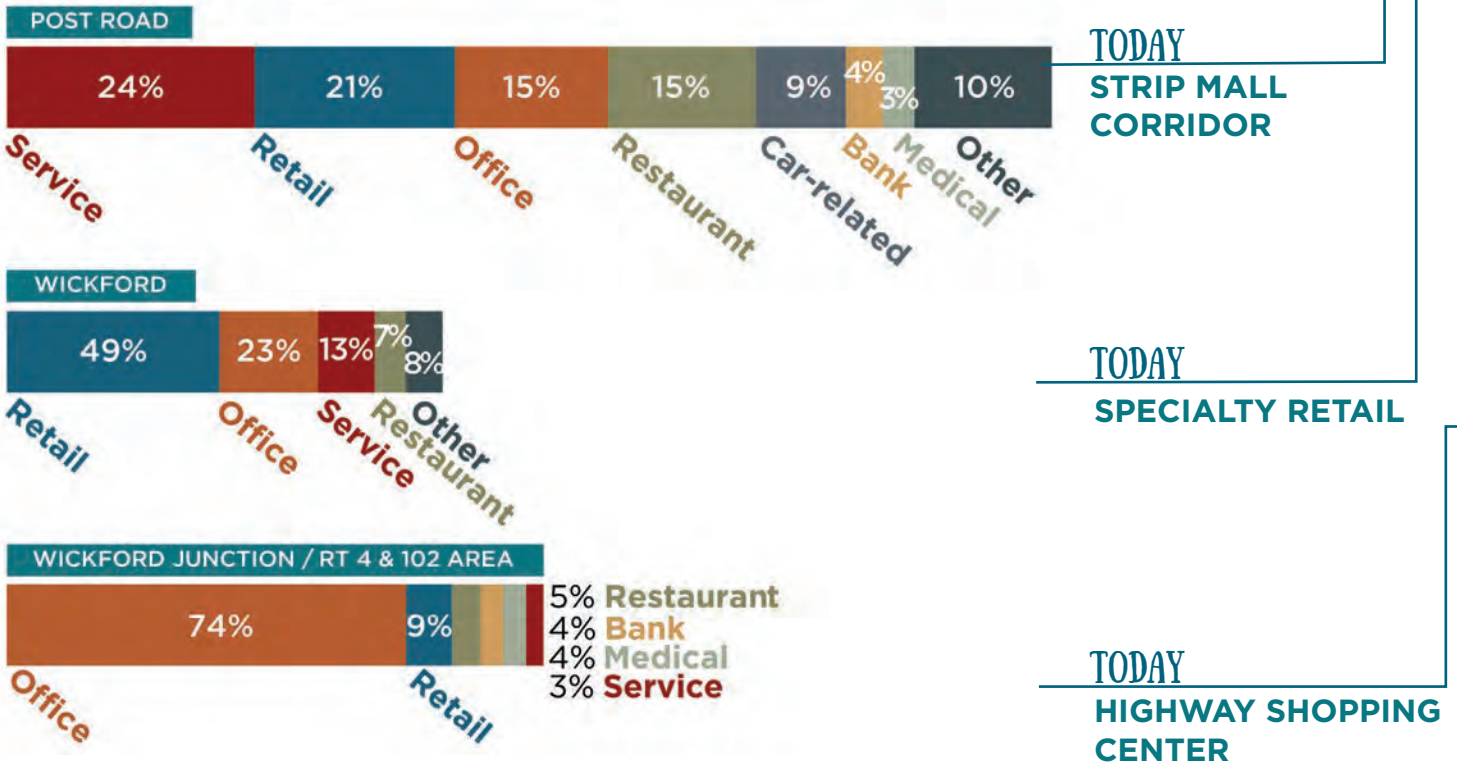
The 2014 market study shows little market demand for new retail and service, but finds potential for a **change in type and scale**:

- For Post Road, more workforce housing and services that fare well near high-density housing.
- For Wickford Village and Wickford Junction, small scale, independent enterprises.<sup>1</sup>

**76%** of survey participants consider **Post Road revitalization** a priority, but traffic counts are far higher around Route 4/102.

“There used to be a reason to go through Post Road with the Navy and before Route 4, but now it’s a ghost road.”

**Figure 18. Breakdown of business types, 2015.**  
Source: Interface Studio field survey, 2015.



<sup>5</sup> North Kingstown Community Market Study: Economic and Real Estate Analysis for Sustainable Land Use Outcomes, 2014.

**TOMORROW**

**A revitalizing mixed use corridor tied to the dense surrounding neighborhoods and Quonset.**

**POST ROAD**

Post Road is a typical strip corridor that has suffered a slow decline since its heyday when the Navy base was located in Quonset and before Route 4 and 403 directed traffic away from the corridor. Regulatory and physical challenges, including easements and state rights of way constraints, Post Road Corridor zoning/lot size, and roadway design, have stalled the redevelopment of vacant parcels along the corridor and must be addressed. National Grid holds a century-old easement right along Post Road that was once vital as a railway service corridor in a mostly undeveloped rural area over 100 years ago but today imposes a major constraint on urban development. The opportunity exists to leverage the growth at Quonset to build up the residential and customer base to support Post Road businesses.

**TOMORROW**

**The historic “heart of North Kingstown” and a classic New England waterfront village.**

**WICKFORD**

Currently a location for specialty retail and town events, Wickford’s history, waterfront and growing arts community should be the building blocks for its economic success. Wickford’s shops, however, have experienced high turnover and have not yet produced the retail and restaurant mix seen in comparable waterfront villages. To reach its potential as a destination, several key areas must be addressed, including: creating design standards to preserve village character, improved traffic and walkability, lack of parking, sewers, flooding and sea level rise, emphasis on the waterfront, balancing the needs of businesses and residents and connectivity to assets around the village.

**TOMORROW**

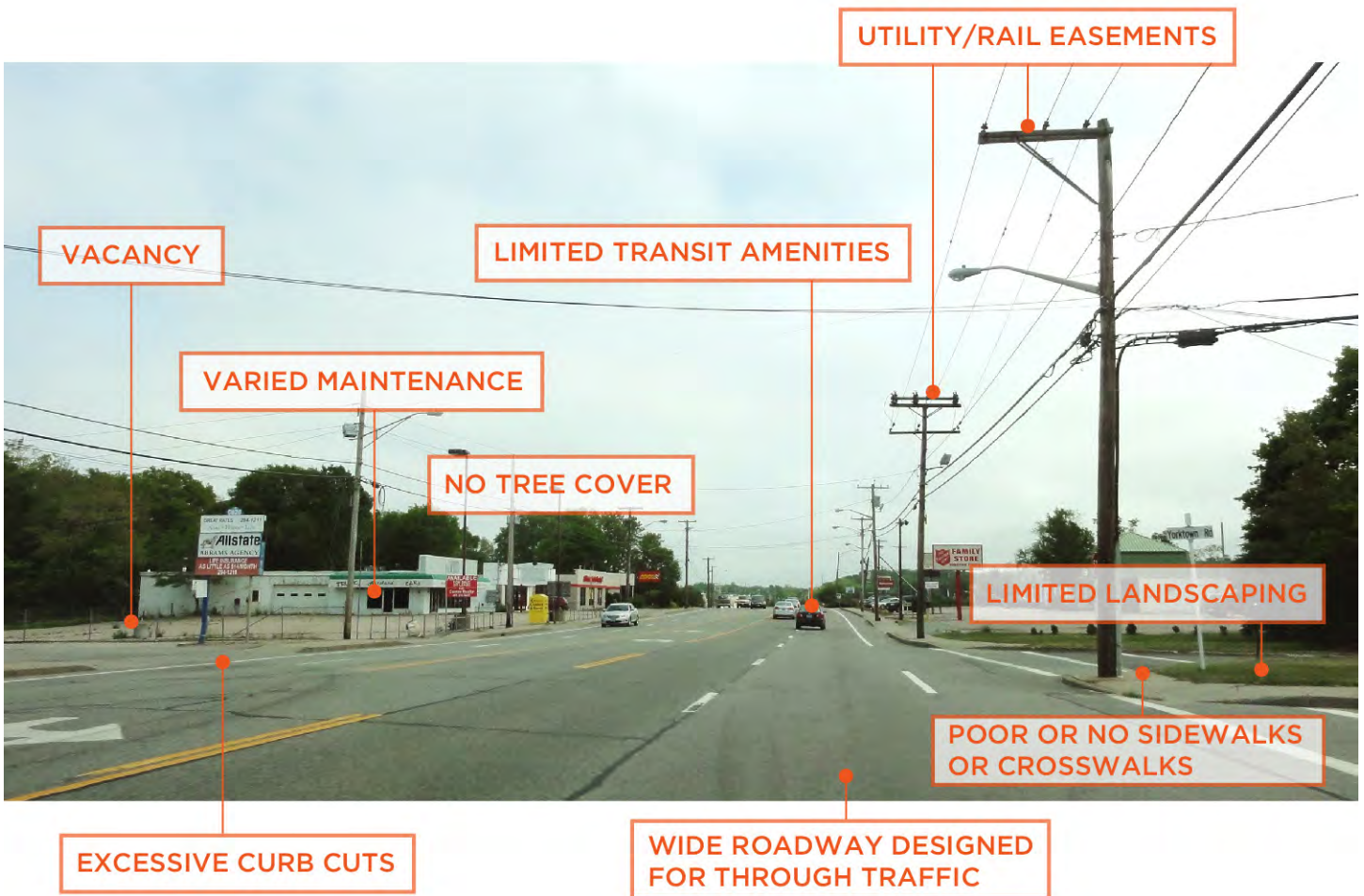
**A new walkable mixed use center built around the rail and bus transit hub.**

**WICKFORD JUNCTION**

Its location at the high traffic intersection of Routes 4 and 102 have spurred the development of this area as a highway shopping center with mainly big box and chain stores. The new multimodal transit hub has the potential to be the central driver of a more compact and less auto-dependent scale of growth that encourages more activity in and around the Junction through housing, office and retail development that supports transit and improved connections to and from the Junction.

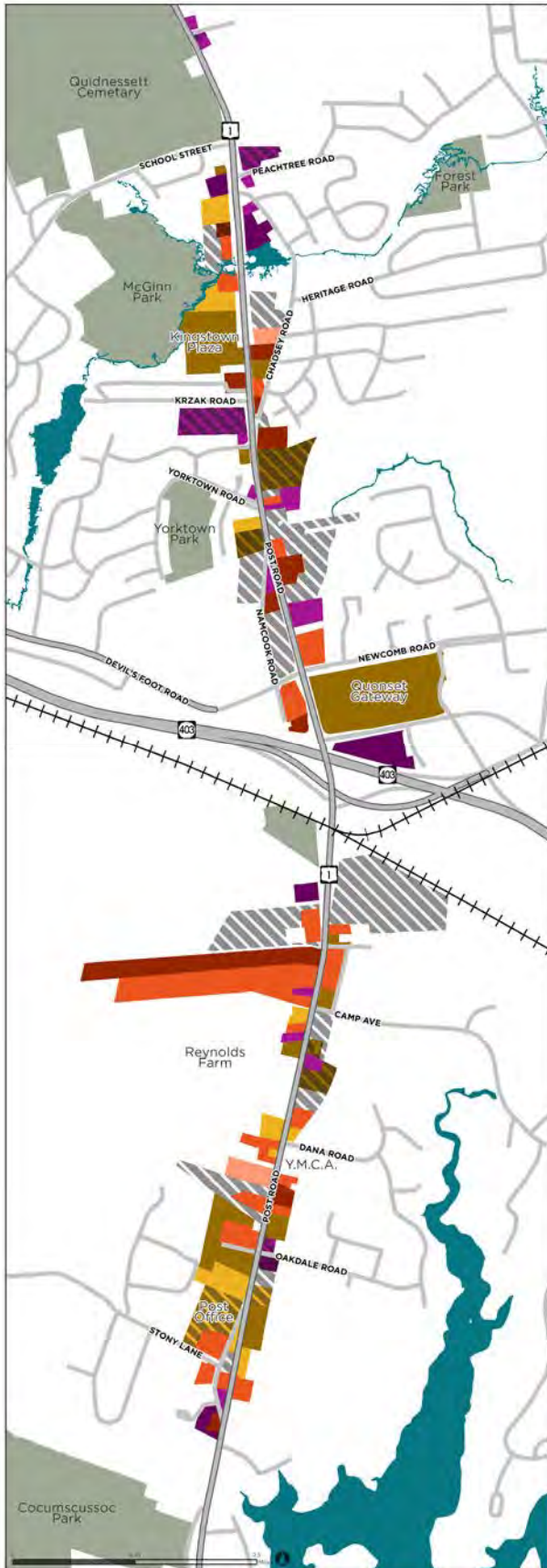
**Post Road vacancy and infrastructure are challenges to making it a vibrant commercial corridor.**

“ While redeveloping the existing and often empty commercial areas should be a priority, it has to go hand in hand with improving Post Road itself. ”



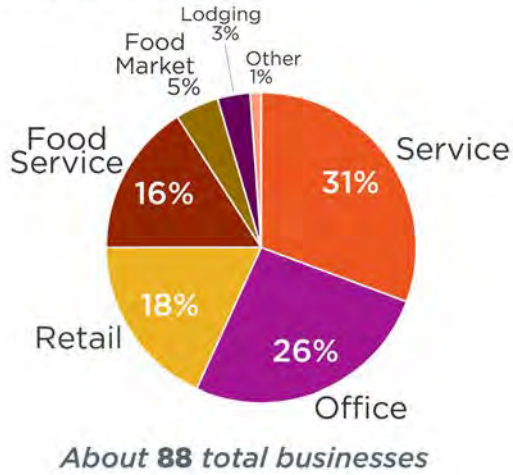
Post Road conditions

Post Road North stretches from Frenchtown Road to 403, and Post Road South runs from 403 to West Main Street. Commercial properties between School Street and Richard Smith Drive were surveyed for the map below.



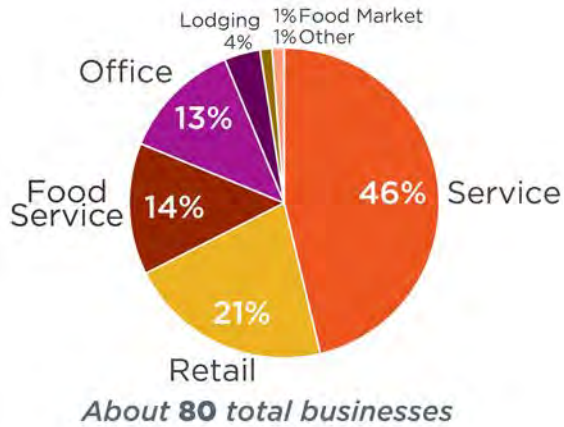
**COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES: POST ROAD NORTH**

COMMERCIAL TYPE BY BUSINESS



**COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES: POST ROAD SOUTH**

COMMERCIAL TYPE BY BUSINESS



COMMERCIAL TYPE BY PARCEL

- Service
- Retail
- Office
- Restaurant or Other Food Service
- Shopping Center
- Lodging
- Other
- Vacant or Partially Vacant

Source: Interface Studio field survey, 2015

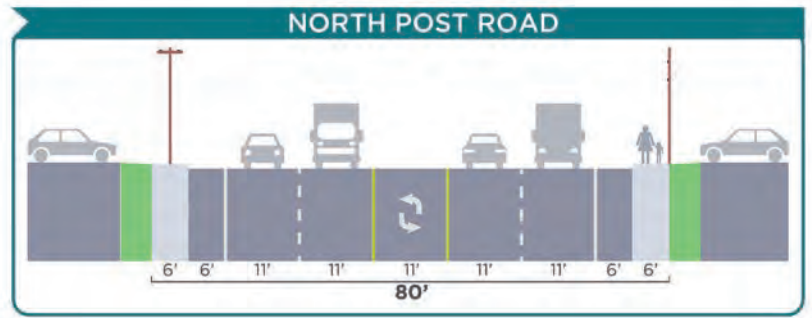
Figure 19. Post Road commercial properties map.

Post Road is designed to move a high volume of cars through quickly but daily traffic has declined and the corridor is surrounded by densely populated neighborhoods.

Average annual daily traffic was **19,000-21,800**, a **downward trend** over the last decade.<sup>1</sup>

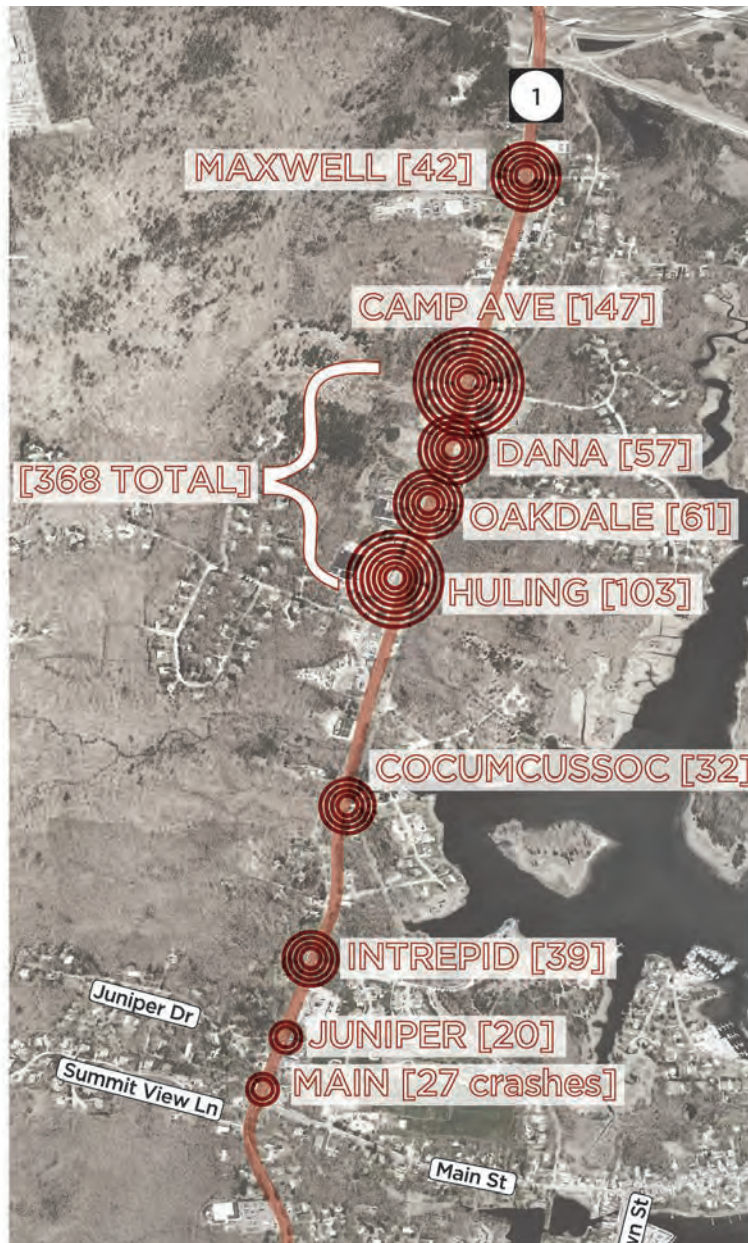
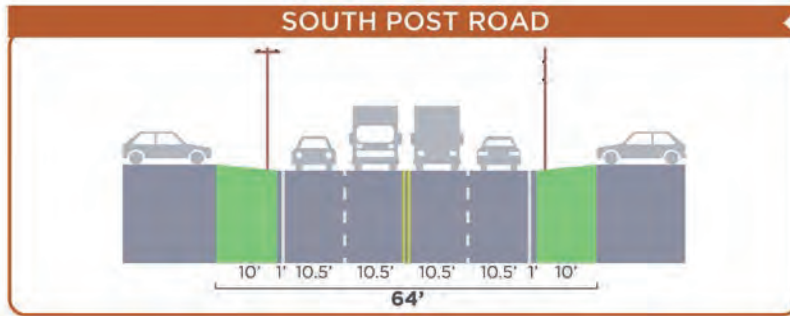
Approximately **4,700** people live within a **10-minute walk** of Post Road.<sup>2</sup>

**1,248** crashes between 2008-2015 along Post Road.



**Figure 20. Post Road crash hot spots**  
 Source: Rhode Island Department of Transportation (Jan. 2008-Sept. 2015)

<sup>1</sup> Garofalo, RIDOT; <sup>2</sup> U.S. Census 2010.





Port of Davisville in Quonset Business Park.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update, the Town of North Kingstown has initiated the following projects and programs:

## AGREEMENT

- Municipal services agreement with Quonset
- Sewer agreement

## REGULATIONS

- Transfer of Development Rights
- Compact Village Development ordinance
- Wickford Junction transit-oriented development
- Post Road ordinance
- Unified development regulations

## PLANS/STUDIES

- North Kingstown Community Market Study
- Transfer of Development Rights and Identification of Village Centers reports

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- Water Service Area
- Post Road sewer installation



# KEY PUBLIC INPUT

In public input gathered through the survey, public forums, online activities and interviews, commercial development emerged as a top concern. A majority favor more commercial options, but the type and location is important.

For most residents, this means focusing on the revitalization of existing commercial areas, particularly Post Road and Wickford Village, and encouraging the development of small businesses over big box stores of the type seen around Wickford Junction.

76% of the survey respondents said Post Road was a top priority for commercial development, citing vacancy and physical deterioration as top concerns.

Restaurants, entertainment and retail were among the top 5 types of development survey respondents most wanted to see in North Kingstown.

Residents and stakeholders viewed economic growth at Quonset Business Park very favorably and considered continued development of Quonset a priority. However, many felt the business park should be better connected to the rest of town, physically and programmatically.

“ People define North Kingstown by Wickford and Post Road. ”

WHAT ARE YOUR MAJOR CONCERNS? (choose up to 3 out of 8)

#2

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

DO YOU WANT

MORE  
LESS  
SAME

?

53% want  
MORE

“ Need a larger commercial tax base. ”

but

“ Commercial development such as big box stores ...diminish the character of the town. ”

particularly restaurants, entertainment venues, and retail

WHAT DO YOU DO IN NORTH KINGSTOWN?  
WHAT DO YOU NEED TO LEAVE NORTH KINGSTOWN FOR?



“ I regularly have to leave town to find good restaurants and arts/cultural events. ”

Figure 21. Survey responses regarding commercial development.

## HOW COULD WE IMPROVE WICKFORD JUNCTION?

### TOP IDEAS IN ORDER OF THEIR IMPORTANCE TO PARTICIPANTS

1. **Better transit**  
between North Kingstown, Providence, and Boston
2. **Programming**  
such as a farmer's market or outdoor activities
3. **Bike connections**  
to major destinations around town
4. **A mix of uses**  
such as housing, retail, and offices
5. **More retail**
6. **In-town transit options**
7. **A Park & Ride transit hub**
8. **Open space**



Wickford Junction received mixed reviews from residents, mainly due to the type of commercial development and potential strain on natural resources. Most participants in the planning process saw the station as an asset that could be a driver of economic development but was not yet fulfilling its potential. More activity, better connections, and mixed use, transit-oriented development were seen as important steps to improve Wickford Junction.

## HOW COULD THE WATERFRONT AT WICKFORD BE BETTER?

**26%** said we need to have more spaces for **PROGRAMS & RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- " Stage at Brown Street Wharf "
- Public market
- Social Hub
- Marine check-in kiosk

**23%** said we need **BETTER ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE**

- Pedestrian bridge
- Waterfront walkway
- Open Space - green space and seating area
- Bike access
- Pedestrian friendly

**23%** said we need **DEVELOPMENT**

- More Restaurants with outdoor dining
- Micro brew pub
- Art & Culture Center

**19%** said we need **BETTER LANDSCAPING**

- Grassy areas for sitting
- Coastal perennial landscape

Wickford Village was identified as the heart of North Kingstown but needs more activity and better use of its waterfront location to be a destination.

Figure 22. Summary of public forum activity generating ideas for improving Wickford Junction and Wickford Village.

# GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 1:

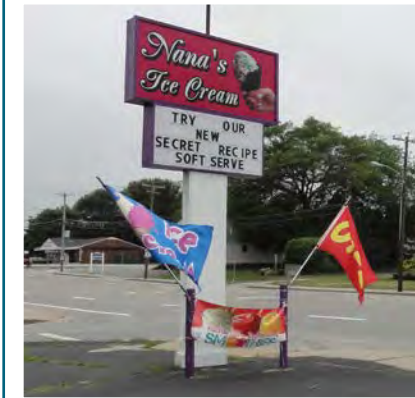
## POSITION NORTH KINGSTOWN AS A COMPETITIVE ECONOMIC HUB AND GOOD PLACE FOR BUSINESS

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

### 1.1 Ensure a clear and predictable process in business interactions with the Town of North Kingstown and market the town as a good place for business.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	1.1.a	Streamline regulations and the regulatory process, through tools such as Viewpoint, by implementing the LEAN study findings (See Appendix) and creating guidance documents and checklist to facilitate the development review process.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget
★	1.1.b	Utilize the economic development administrator to serve as a liaison between the town, businesses, and nonprofit economic development groups, and oversee implementation of town economic development process, actions and local decision making, which include:	Town Council	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget
		o Maintaining an active role in statewide and regional economic development programs.	Economic Development Administrator (EDA)	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget
		o Maintaining an up-to-date and accessible inventory of commercial and industrial sites, incentives, and regulatory information.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget

EDA=Economic Development Administrator



## ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION/ DEVELOPMENT FUND

A fund to finance projects and programs that create and/or retain jobs, improve the local and/or regional tax base, or otherwise enhance the quality of life in the community. Such a fund can support goals such as job creation/retention, downtown/commercial center revitalization, and community development.

**1.1 Ensure a clear and predictable process in business interactions with the Town of North Kingstown and market the town as a good place for business.** (continued)

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
		o Conducting tours of available sites and town amenities.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget
		o Helping small business owners and entrepreneurs navigate the regulatory process.	EDA	Ongoing	Staff time
★	1.1.c	Prepare an economic development plan and develop a marketing strategy that highlights the town’s natural assets, economic opportunities, transportation, and quality of life.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, EDA grants
		o Connect to state marketing initiatives targeting local and regional real estate brokers, businesses and institutions.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, EDA grants
		o Develop relationships with business incubators, collaborative working spaces, educational and training institutions to determine needs and market North Kingstown opportunities.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, EDA grants
		o Promote local businesses through marketing at events and programs including but not limited to the Town Gift Certificate and Greeter program and Shop Shop Local initiatives such as Small Business Saturday.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, EDA grants, NK Chamber of Commerce, QDC, state funds
	1.1.d	Establish an economic revitalization/development fund.	Town Council	3 to 5 years	Town budget
	1.1.e	Develop small business training, technical assistance, and incubation.	EDA	3 to 5 years	Staff time, grants, Commerce RI, local trades schools
	1.1.f	Incorporate a plan to develop pad ready sites or analyze the use of pad-ready sites, streamlined permitting or an accelerated approval process.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	Staff time, EDA grants

EDA=Economic Development Administrator, QDC=Quonset Development Corporation



GOAL 2:

**LEVERAGE THE SUCCESS OF QUONSET AS A JOBS CENTER FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE TOWN AS A WHOLE**

**POLICIES AND ACTIONS:**

**1.2 Support the growth of the business park in a manner compatible with the community.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	1.2.a	Monitor implementation of the Quonset/Davisville Master Plan and work with Quonset Development Corporation, Commerce RI, and Rhode Island Airport Corporation to ensure the protection of the town’s interests.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Staff time, Federal EDA, state funding
	1.2.b	Provide vegetative landscaped buffering to protect neighboring communities.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	Staff time, QDC
	1.2.c	Provide town professional staff participation at the Quonset Development Corporation Technical Review Committee to ensure development is consistent with community goals and environmental regulations for construction practices.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
	1.2.d	Partner with QDC to support growth at Quonset Davisville that increases the payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) to the town.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	Staff time
	1.2.e	Maintain and update performance standards as needed.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
	1.2.f	Maintain streamlined, transparent development review that is protective of the town’s interests.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time

QDC=Quonset Development Corporation

**1.3 Continue to encourage an eco-industrial model of clean, green, and safe operations through safety standards, efficiency and zero waste practices.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.3.a	Work with businesses to encourage industrial development that utilizes best practices for green energy or energy efficiency and emissions.	Town Council	Ongoing	Town and QDC staff time
★	1.3.b	Create opportunities for resource conservation and reuse.	Town Council	Ongoing	Town and QDC staff time
	1.3.c	Increase the use of multi-modal facilities and expanded freight rail to conserve energy, reduce congestion, and minimize roadway and bridge wear and tear.	Town Council	Ongoing	Staff time, RIDOT, Statewide Planning Program, QDC, RIDEM

RIDEM=Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, RIOER=Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation, QDC=Quonset Development Corporation



Toray cogeneration facilities

**INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY AND ZERO WASTE PRACTICES**

Greener operations can benefit energy and resource intensive industries by allowing for the capture and re-use of waste, by-products and heat generated during production. Toray Plastics in Quonset, the largest single user of electricity in Rhode Island, has invested in cogeneration systems which create electricity through the capture of waste heat.



### 1.4 Encourage better connection between Quonset Business Park and North Kingstown.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	1.4.a	Work with Quonset Business Park to balance interests of town and Quonset Business Park with regard to the location of businesses that would otherwise be taxpaying entities on Post Road or other parts of town.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	Staff time
★	1.4.b	Pursue partnerships between Quonset companies and North Kingstown businesses especially on Post Road and the Quonset Gateway and connect Quonset workers to events and businesses in North Kingstown.	Town Council	3 to 5 years	Staff time
	1.4.c	Institute a mix of office, retail, light industrial, institutional and public space uses in Quonset Gateway relative to the town as a whole/that town can handle.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	Staff time
	1.4.d	Work with the RIAC through the master planning process to evaluate any infrastructure expansion projects at the airport.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
	1.4.e	Support the continued use and expansion of the roll-on roll-off operations at the Davisville Piers.	Town Council	Ongoing	Staff time

RIAC=Rhode Island Airport Corporation



Midnight Sun

DRUMS PERFUME / CRYSTALS SCARVES  
WINDCHIMES NECKLACES GHANA BASKETS  
CANDLES JEWELRY SALT LAMPS CELTIC DESIGNS  
FAIR TRADE



WEST MAIN ST MAIN ST

NO PARKING ANY TIME



GOAL 3:

**ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS**

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

**1.5 Foster conditions to encourage growth that is compatible in size and scale in existing commercial areas, including Lafayette, Post Road, Shady Lea, Wickford Junction, and Wickford Village.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	1.5.a	Use incentives to encourage commercial and industrial revitalization in appropriate sites, such as in existing commercial areas with infrastructure.	Town Council	Ongoing	staff time, Commerce RI
PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.5.b	Provide opportunities for high quality mixed use projects that enhance village character and promote infrastructure efficiency and alternative transportation use.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	staff time

**1.6 Foster conditions to allow for the revitalization and growth of Post Road.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.6.a	Undertake collaboration to address common needs of businesses and coordinate improvements along Post Road.	EDA	3 to 5 years	staff time
★	1.6.b	Revise Post Road ordinances to allow for greater flexibility in uses, including mixed use, commercial, and residential, and address standards for height, parking and buffers, lighting, signage, frontage, sidewalks.	Town Council	Ongoing	staff time
★	1.6.c	Assess the quality and marketability of vacant parcels on Post Road by reducing the impact of utility poles and easements.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget, RIDOT, National Grid, FHWA

FHWA=Federal Highway Administration, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation

## 1.7 Improve the pedestrian environment of Post Road to better connect with the community.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	1.7.a	Update Post Road design guidelines to improve Post Road's appearance and pedestrian experience, and encourage Complete Streets design <sup>1</sup> .	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	staff time
★	1.7.b	Reduce curb cuts, improve safety and congestion on Post Road.	Planning Commission	3 to 5 years	staff time, town budget, RIDOT, business owners
	1.7.c	Develop an access management plan for Post Road to create space for landscaping, crosswalks and pedestrian amenities.	Planning Department	5 to 7 years	staff time
	1.7.d	Provide incentives to Post Road property owners to make improvements, including but not limited to landscaping, signage, 50-50 sidewalks partnerships and façade improvement.	Town Council	Ongoing	town budget, staff time, RIDOT
	1.7.e	Develop pocket parks and other scenic areas on Post Road.	Planning Department	5 to 7 years	town budget, staff time, RIDOT

<sup>1</sup> See Element 3 on Circulation for detailed illustrations of proposed Complete Street redesigns for Post Road.

## 1.8 Improve the safety of Post Road.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.8.a	Establish site-specific means to improve safety and adequate movement in conformance with applicable roadway corridor design standards such as:	Town Council	Ongoing	town budget, staff time, RIDOT
		o Intersection redesign; segment redesign; signalization; round-about design; cloverleaf design; sidewalk construction and stormwater management; bicycle lanes; reduced/combined curb cuts through access management.	Town Council	Ongoing	town budget, staff time, RIDOT
	1.8.b	Work with RIDOT to improve safety at high accident locations.	Town Council	Ongoing	town budget, staff time, RIDOT
	1.8.c	Work with RIDOT to provide pedestrian-activated crosswalks, crossings, median waiting areas and lighting that will allow for the safe crossing of Post Road.	Town Council	Ongoing	town budget, staff time, RIDOT
		o Identify unsafe and congested areas for future improvement.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	town budget, staff time, RIDOT

RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation



**Figure 23.** Proposed Post Road improvements to address physical and regulatory barriers to revitalization. Different sets of improvements can help revitalize Post Road including sidewalk improvements, bike lane installation, and curb cuts reductions.

## 1.9 Enhance Wickford Village as a waterfront destination for restaurant, retail, harbor activity, and recreation.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	1.9.a	Pursue the development of diverse and destination businesses in Wickford that generate activity at different times of the day and different times of the year.	EDA	1 to 3 years	staff time
		o Encourage businesses to stay open later especially during events.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Wickford Merchants Association
		o Encourage expansion of Wickford farmer's market and consider year-round location.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, Wickford Merchants Association, Farmer's Market and Local Food Promotion Program (USDA)
		o Support the development of Wickford Village as a boater destination.	EDA	5 to 7 years	staff time
★	1.9.b	Develop flood resistant programming and public space on the Wickford parking lot to improve waterfront access.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	staff time, RIEMA
	1.9.c	Improve connections throughout Wickford.	Planning Department	3 to 5 years	Staff time, RIDOT
		o Develop a connected waterfront walkway.	Planning Department	7 to 10 years	Town budget, RIDEM, other grants
		o Improve visibility and access to Wickford commercial properties that do not have street frontage.	EDA	5 to 7 years	Wickford Merchants Association
		o Open and identify public access points to the waterfront.	Planning Department	3 to 5 years	staff time
★	1.9.d	Manage parking in Wickford Village during events and conduct a parking study to identify alternate parking locations such as Wilson Park, Wickford Middle School, Wickford Elementary and the Library.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	Wickford Merchants Association, NKPD, staff time, town budget

RIEMA=Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation, USDA=United States Dept. of Agriculture, WMA=Wickford Merchants Association, NKPD=North Kingstown Planning Department

“ Increase waterfront access. Wickford has one of the best harbors on the bay and is centrally located. We need to increase access for all. ”

“ A tourist center in Wickford... Town Hall Annex would be a good location. ”



**3** The waterfront walkway in Wickford ends in the parking lot.



**4** Town Hall Annex

- ✓ RELOCATED PARKING
- ✓ SEWERS
- ✓ GATEWAY SIGNAGE
- ✓ BETTER CONNECTIONS
- ✓ WATERFRONT WALKWAY
- ✓ DIVERSE ACTIVITIES & BUSINESSES

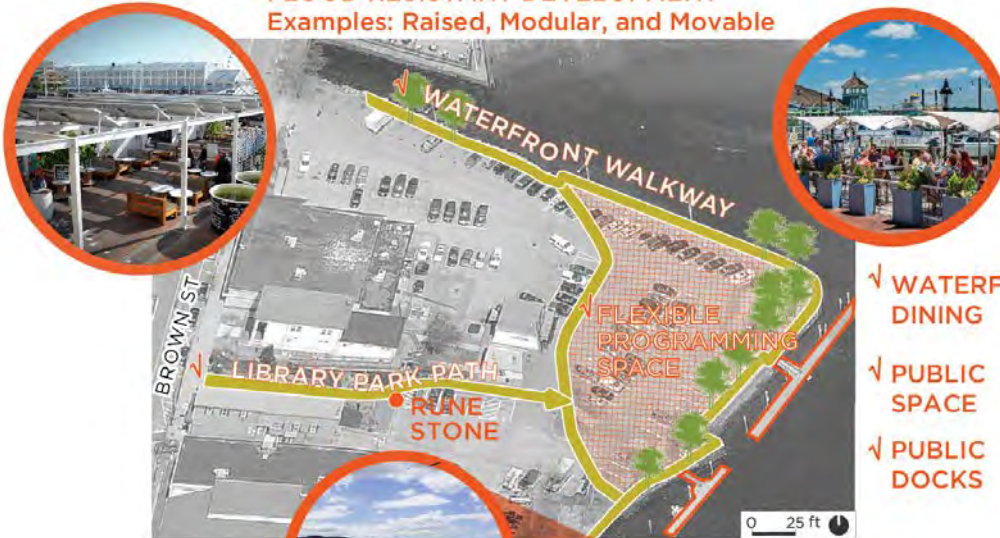


Sea Level Rise 1'	Gateway Signage	<b>OPPORTUNITY SITES</b>	<b>4</b> Town Hall Annex
Sea Level Rise 3'	Improved Connection	<b>1</b> Wickford Elementary	<b>5</b> Wilsons
Sea Level Rise 5'		<b>2</b> Wickford Market Place	<b>6</b> Town Hall
		<b>3</b> Parking Lot	<b>7</b> Community Center

**Figure 24. Wickford Village opportunity sites and proposed improvements connect destinations.** Proposed improvements in Wickford Village aim to enhance its waterfront location and connect destinations, while adapting to sea level rise.

**SHORT-TERM**

✓ FLOOD RESISTANT DEVELOPMENT  
Examples: Raised, Modular, and Movable



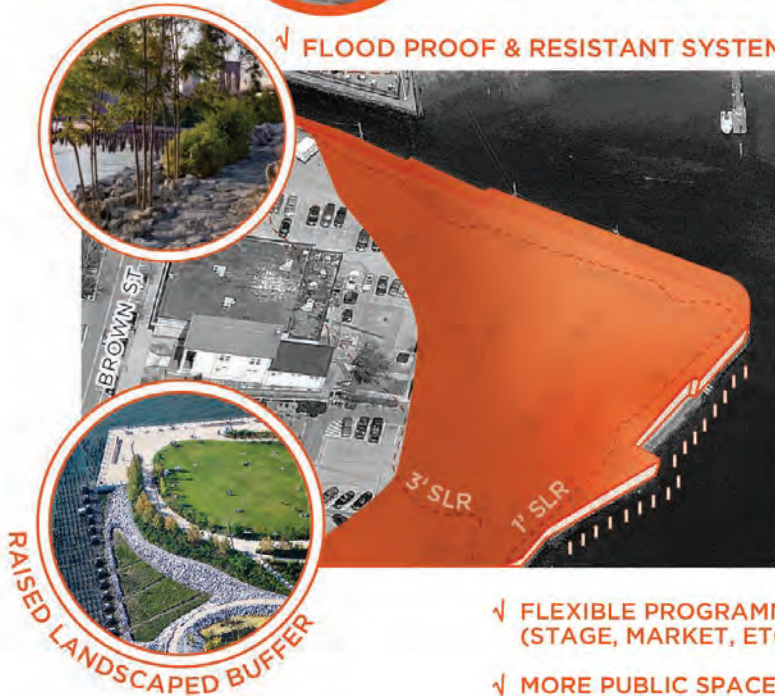
- ✓ WATERFRONT DINING
- ✓ PUBLIC SPACE
- ✓ PUBLIC DOCKS



✓ FLOOD PROOF SYSTEMS  
Example: Floating Walkway

✓ FLOOD PROOF & RESISTANT SYSTEM

**LONG-TERM**



- ✓ FLEXIBLE PROGRAMMABLE SPACE (STAGE, MARKET, ETC.)
- ✓ MORE PUBLIC SPACE
- ✓ INFO KIOSK

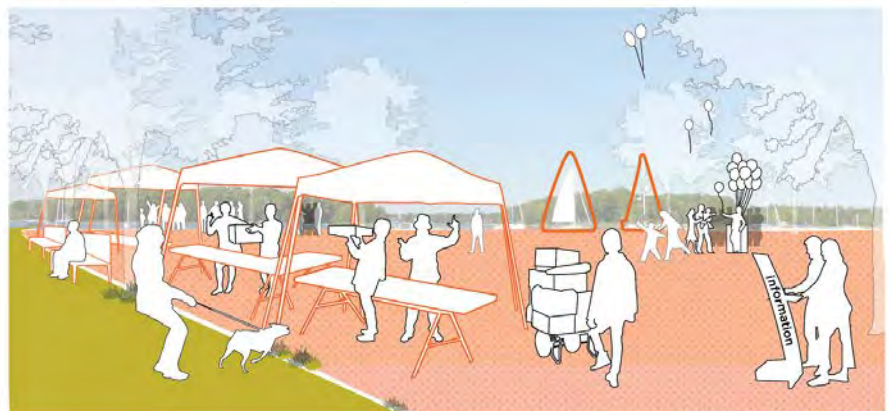
- ✓ BOATER AMENITIES
- ✓ WATERFRONT WALKWAY

**Figure 25.** Proposed short-term and long-term public space improvements to Wickford waterfront incorporating flood resistance

ABOVE: Both short-term and long-term can be implemented to protect Wickford waterfront.

**Figure 26.** Proposed public space improvements to Wickford parking lot

RIGHT: Ideas for improving the parking lot aim to transform it into a new public space that can accommodate different town events and programs, and enhance access to the waterfront.





**1.10 Encourage opportunities for commercial, office, and industrial land uses to increase local employment and tax income to the Town, while protecting the environment.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.10.a	Evaluate the ability of new industrial and commercial development to be environmentally sound, compatible with adjacent land uses, and consistent with environmental regulations.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
	1.10.b	Identify commercial and industrial land where adequate infrastructure and services are available or are scheduled for improvement or provision.	Planning Department	3 to 5 years	Staff time, RIEMA
	1.10.c	Assess whether existing and proposed commercial and industrial uses overburden the existing and planned infrastructure and do not adversely impact natural resources.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time, RIDOT

RIEMA=Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation

## 1.11 Encourage more activity and better connections at Wickford Junction.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.11.a	Dedicate programming of the common spaces and/or surface parking lots in Wickford Junction to bring year-round activity.	EDA	5 to 7 years	Property owner, staff time, town budget to assist
	1.11.b	Establish mixed use transit-oriented development to bring more people and activity to Wickford Junction station.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Property owner, staff time
	1.11.c	Establish better connections between and within Wickford Junction and surrounding neighborhoods and destinations, including Wickford Village, in North Kingstown through Complete Streets design and transit connections.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	RIPTA, RIDOT, town budget

RIPTA=Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation



Crosswalks and signals



Pedestrian refuge



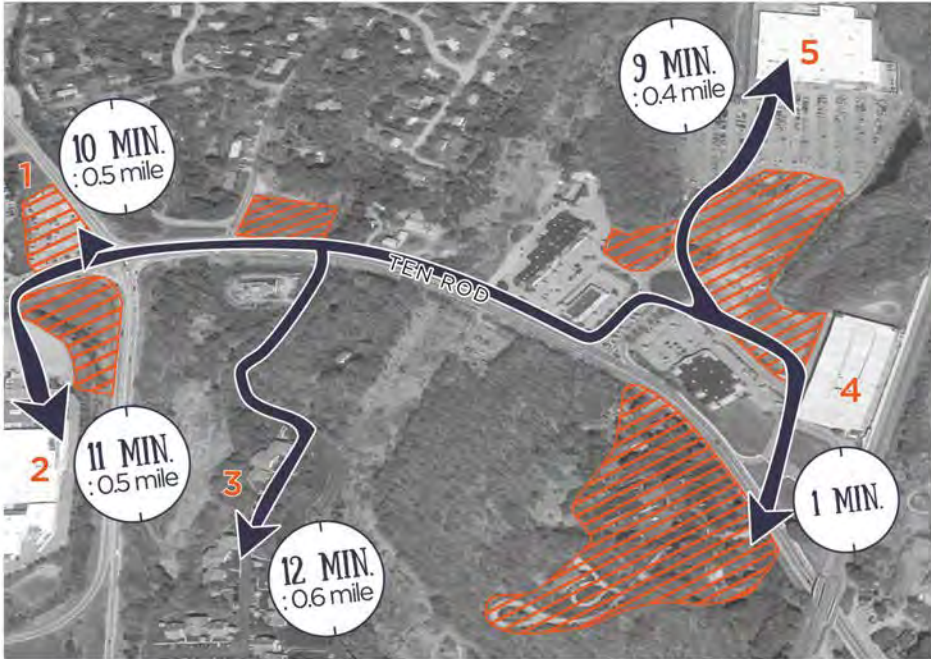
Bike lanes



Median

### WHAT ARE COMPLETE STREETS?

Complete Streets are designed to provide all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motors and transit riders of all ages and abilities with safe and convenient access and mobility. Complete Streets depend on context and may include: sidewalks, bike lanes, public transportation stops, safe crossing opportunities, medians, pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and narrower travel lanes.



**IF YOU WALK FROM THE TRAIN STATION, IT TAKES...**

From the train station, Park & Ride, Stop & Shop, Walmart and other destinations are all about a half mile away which is roughly 10 minutes by walking.

- ✓ INFRASTRUCTURE
- ✓ BETTER BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
- ✓ TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
- ✓ MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

	Bike & Pedestrian Connections
	Opportunity Site
1	Park & Ride
2	Stop & Shop
3	Meadows Professional Office Park
4	Wickford Junction Transit Center
5	Walmart

ICE SKATING



SUMMER MOVIE NIGHTS



FARMERS MARKET



- ✓ YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING  
(Examples: Craft Fair, Ice skating, Farmer's Market, Movie Nights)



**Temporary structure to accommodate diverse programming**

Figure 27. Proposed improvements to infrastructure, connectivity and programming at Wickford Junction to support development

GOAL 4:

## ENCOURAGE PLACE-SPECIFIC, RESOURCE-BASED BUSINESSES THAT ENHANCE SENSE OF PLACE

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

### 1.12 Continue to allow and promote the expansion and development of agriculture, silviculture, aquaculture, commercial fishing and other resource-based businesses, including newly emerging agricultural trends.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.12.a	Link resource-based businesses to North Kingstown heritage and tourism to promote marine economy and agritourism.	EDA	7 to 10 years	staff time, Federal EDA, state funding
★	1.12.b	Support and expand local farm operations, products and farmers markets and work with farmers to highlight locally grown food and opportunities to support local agriculture.	EDA	1 to 3 years	staff time
		o Support the implementation of the Rhode Island Agricultural Partnerships' Five Year Strategic Plan to ensure the viability of farming and forestry, to ensure the continued provision of healthy foods.	EDA	3 to 5 years	staff time
		o Conduct a full food system needs assessment and inventory from cultivation to production, distribution, and waste reuse.	EDA	7 to 10 years	staff time, town budget, RI Food Policy Council, RIDEM, USDA-NRCS, American Farmland Trust

EDA=Economic Development Administrator, RIDEM=Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, USDA-NRCS=US Dept. of Agriculture National Resources Conservation Service

**1.12 Continue to allow and promote the expansion and development of agriculture, silviculture, aquaculture, commercial fishing and other resource-based businesses, including newly emerging agricultural trends.** (continued)

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	1.12.c	Establish an agricultural preservation program through purchase of land and development rights.	Planning Department	Ongoing	NRCS, RIDEM, town budget, local preservation trusts and foundations
		o Use Transfer of Development Rights and Farm, Forest and Open Space to support agricultural land preservation and help keep land in active agricultural use.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	staff time
		o Designate lands for agricultural preservation.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	staff time
		o Map agricultural lands.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	staff time
		o Obtain support from local, state and federal programs to fund the purchase of agricultural land.	Planning Department	Ongoing	staff time
	1.12.d	Identify areas or districts of the community that should be targeted for the development of innovative and other agricultural operations.	Planning Department	3 to 5 years	staff time
		o Consider the creation of an agricultural zone.	Planning Department	5 to 7 years	staff time
	1.12.e	Identify partnerships between municipalities and active farms and/or community groups to better support agricultural uses.	Planning Department	3 to 5 years	staff time



# A LIVABLE TOWN

A plan for HOUSING and NEIGHBORHOODS

---

ELEMENT  
**2**

## VISION

We are a livable town of **safe, walkable** neighborhoods with **friendly** and **diverse** residents.

North Kingstown will encourage a range of housing options to serve households of varying sizes, ages, and socio-economic levels, and ensure housing development is in keeping with town character. Affordability, sustainability and resiliency will be especially important considerations when and where the town decides to provide new services and facilities to support new housing.

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## GOALS

1. Provide a range of housing choices
2. Encourage residential development away from environmentally constrained and sensitive areas, and that reflects town character and supports walkable neighborhoods

# OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES

North Kingstown's residential neighborhoods grew around the villages, the main transportation corridors, and summer cottage communities on the Narragansett Bay. In the 1950s and 1960s, northern North Kingstown developed rapidly around Quonset. Route 4 spurred the development of subdivisions in the western and southern portions of town in the 1980s and 1990s. Since the 2000s, residential development has continued at a slower pace.

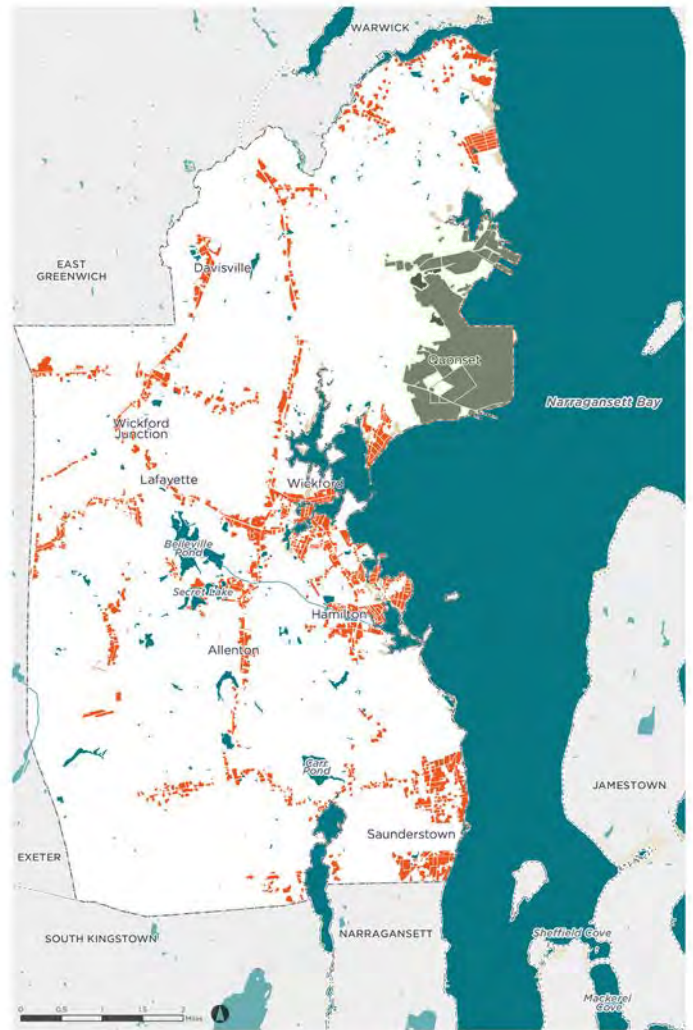
The older residential communities remain the most densely populated [see figure 28]. These communities include the North End and Davisville, Lafayette, Hamilton, Allenton, Wickford, Stony Lane, and the summer cottage communities of Saunderstown, Mount View, and Plum Beach.

Historic homes are concentrated in the village of Wickford, with many examples dating to the 1700s. Overall, housing units in North Kingstown have a median age of 44 years with a median year built of 1969 according to American Community Survey estimates for 2009-2013. Housing is well maintained and stable, with no condition-related concerns such as deterioration or high rates of foreclosure. There are no local shelters located in North Kingstown. Given that more than half of LMI households are cost burdened, there is a potential risk of homelessness.

The composition of neighborhood housing has changed little since the last Comprehensive Plan update in 2008, with single-family homes accounting for three-quarters of the town's housing stock and the majority of new construction consisting of the same. Demographic trends and the 2014 market study indicate that there is demand for more varied housing products including rental and multifamily.

The town's 2014 market study found that non-family households are the fastest growing sector and this segment prefers to rent. The over 55 and 25-34 year old populations represent the near-term demand for housing. These populations also wish for smaller units which are not as easily accessible in North Kingstown as the single-family homes.

The percent of North Kingstown's population which are young empty nesters, or 55 to 64 year olds, is increasing. Older empty nesters, 65 to 75 will see the greatest increase. The young workforce and

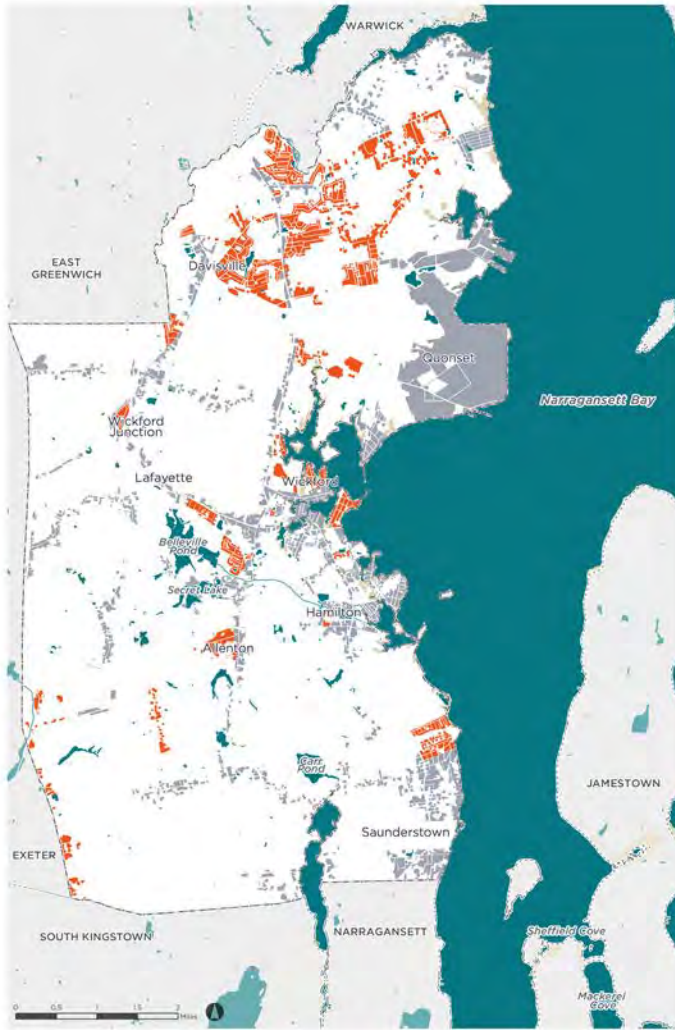


**pre-1950s**

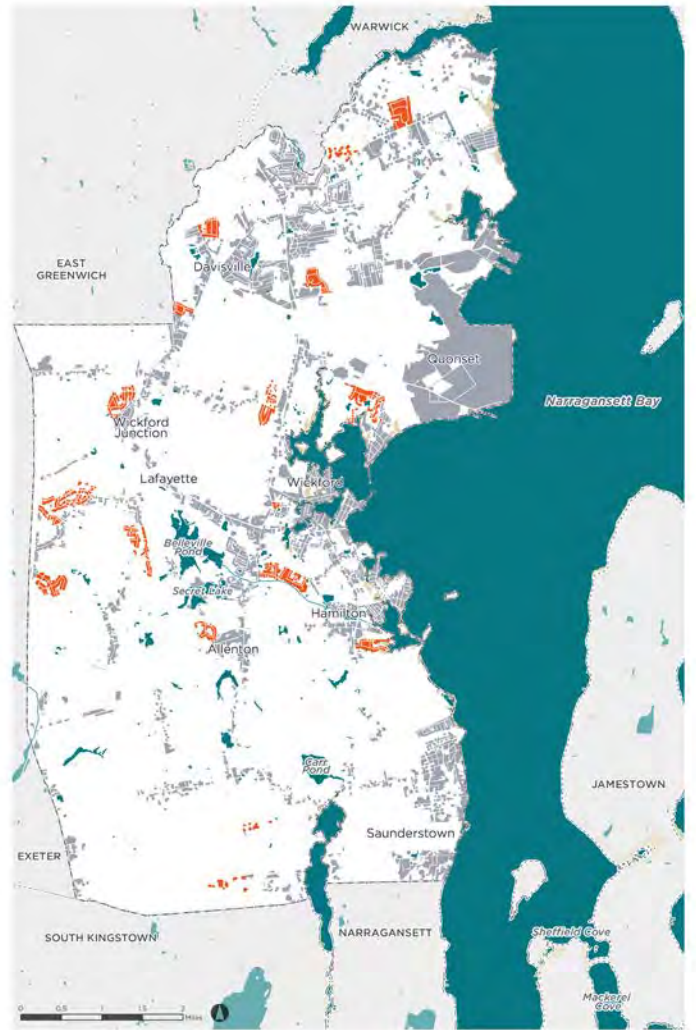
**Figure 28. Development over time, pre-1950s-2010s** grads cohort (adults under 34) will also slightly increase. Families (ages 35 to 54) will represent a smaller percentage of total population. The population of North Kingstown is also seeing a rise in median income, most notably being an increase in the number of households earning \$75,000 to \$100,000.

The market demand indicates support for approximately 500 to 1,600 additional residential units of a smaller scale (1-2 bedrooms) in North





1950s-1960s

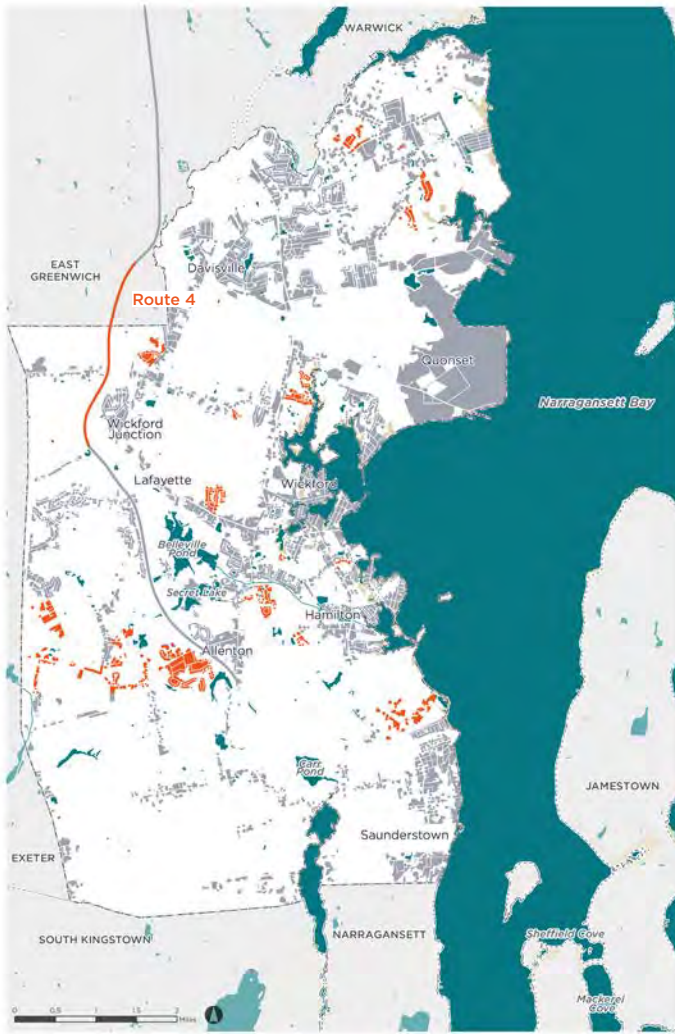


1970s

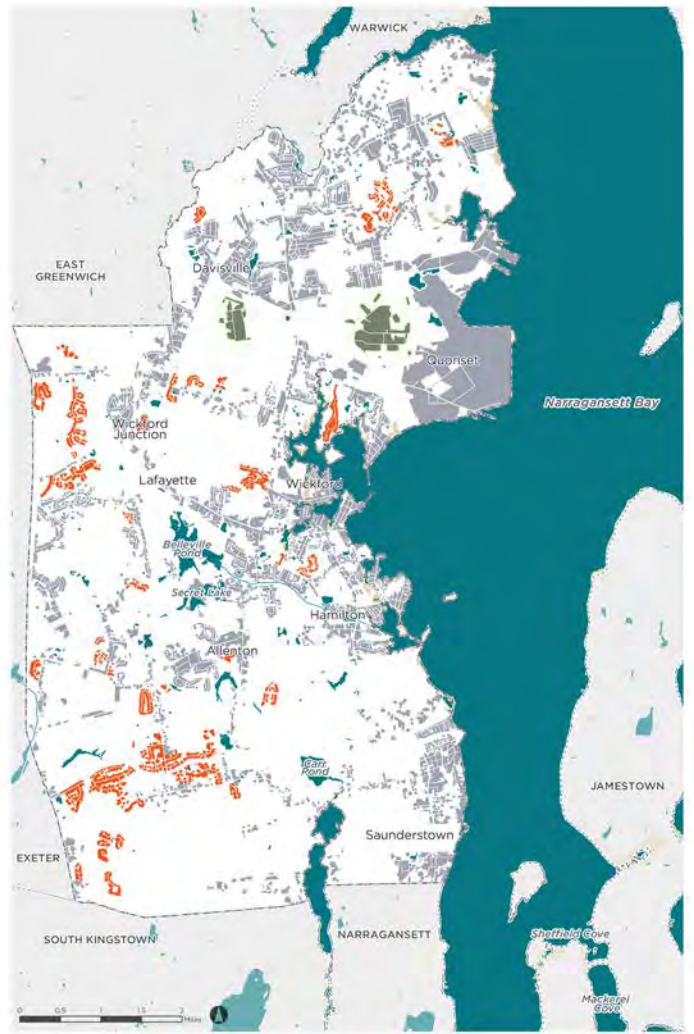
- Residential development
- Other development
- ▨ Development in progress

Kingstown within the next fifteen years. There will be a focus on providing additional rental options. According to the market study, Wickford Junction offers the greatest potential for housing demand. Post Road can also absorb some additional units.

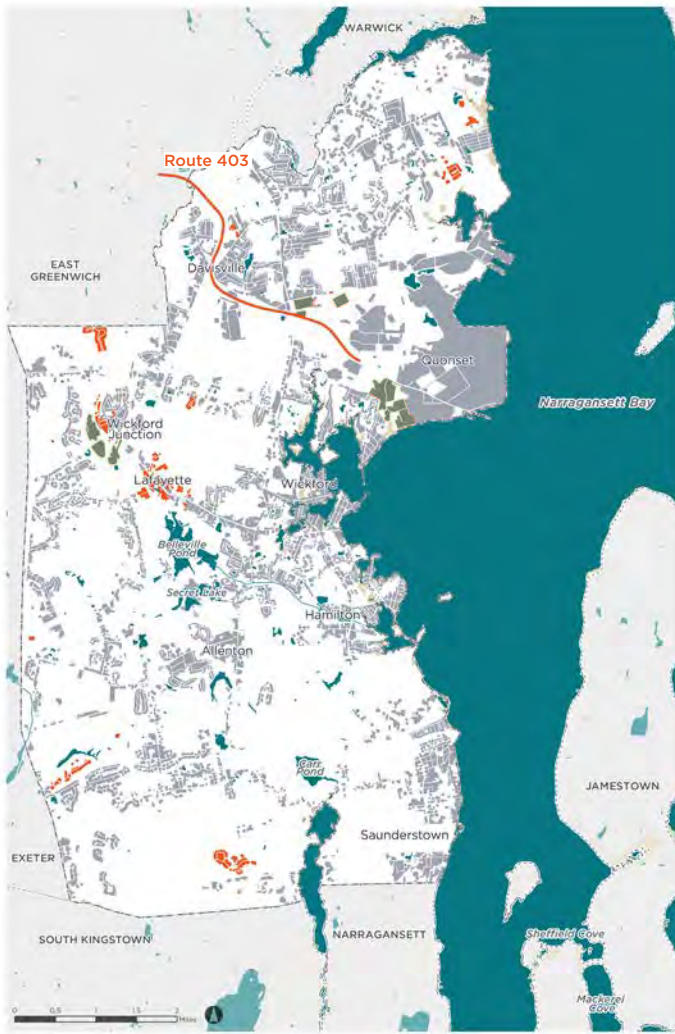
As indicated throughout the comprehensive plan, these areas have been designated for such growth and the town’s regulatory framework has been modified to accommodate these needs.



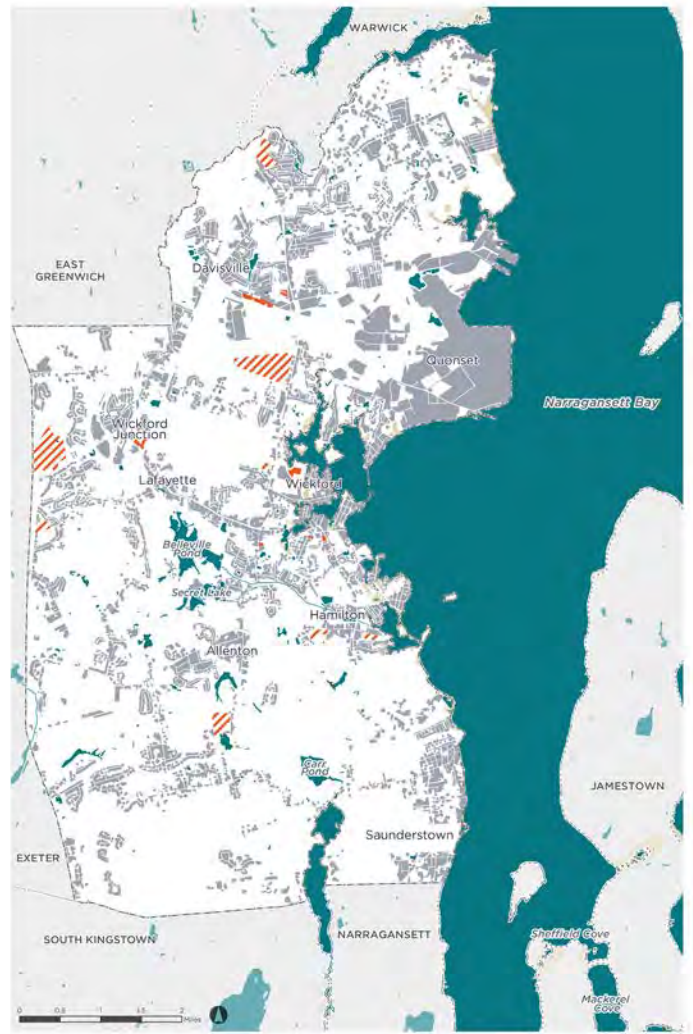
1980s



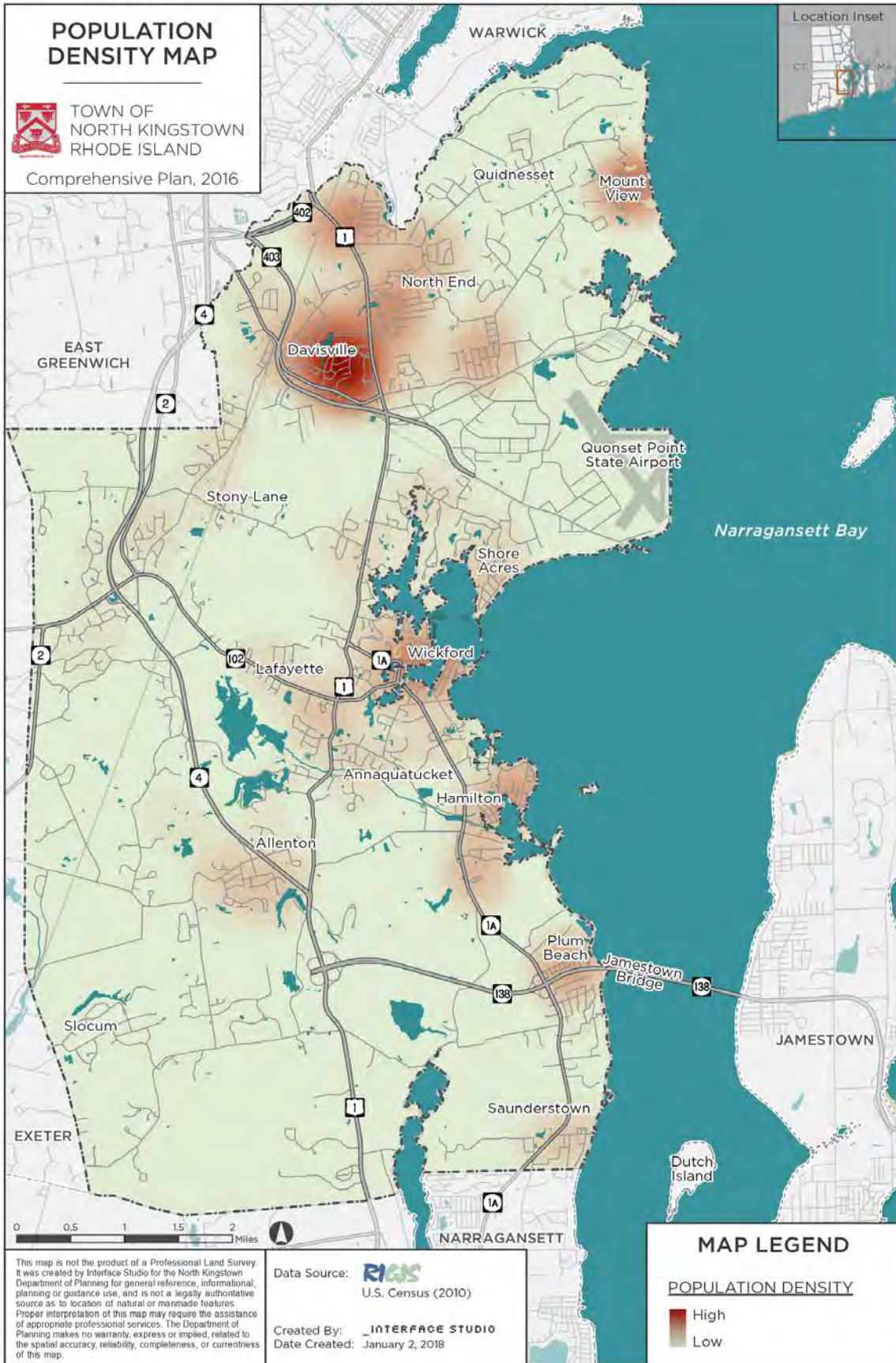
1990s



2000s



2010s



Darker red indicates areas with higher population density. Davisville has the highest population density, followed by other neighborhoods in North End, Mount View, Wickford, Hamilton, and Plum Beach.

**More diverse housing types are needed to accommodate a changing population. Households are shrinking and their composition is changing.**

Between 2000 and 2010, all growth has been in households of **individuals living alone** and **families without children**.<sup>1</sup>

Between 2000 and 2013, there has been an increase in **empty nesters/retirees** and **young adults** and a decrease in the **middle aged** and **young children**.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 30. Household types and change, 2000-2010 <sup>1</sup>

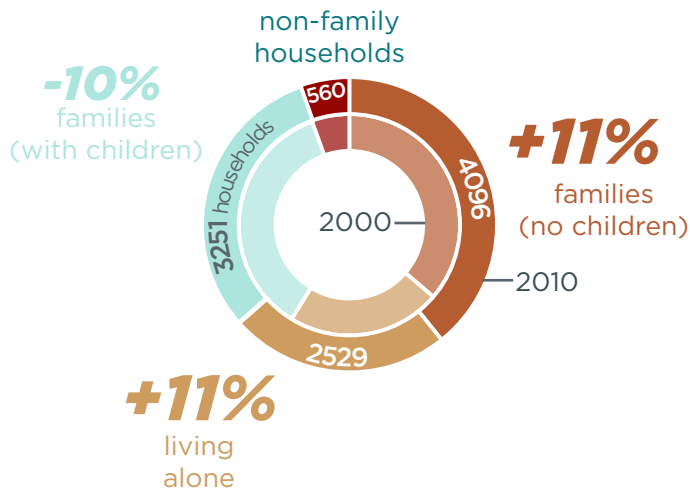
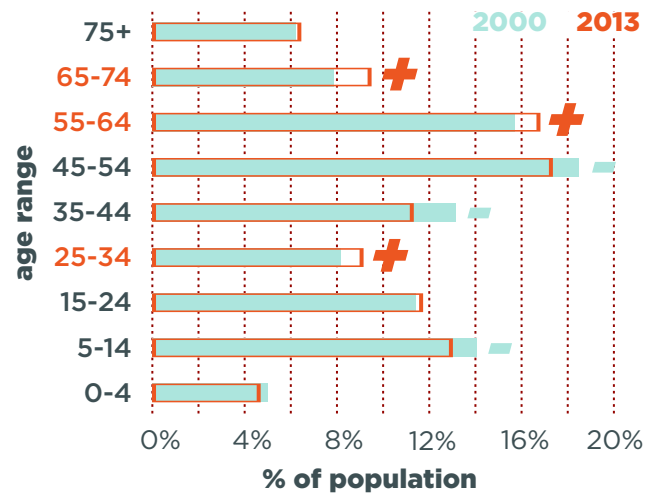


Figure 31. Age distribution and change, 2000-2013 <sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> 2000 and 2010 Census; <sup>2</sup> 2010 Census, 2013 American Community Survey (ACS).

**Housing types remain overwhelmingly single family and there has been little production of multi-family and rental housing.**

**75%** of the housing stock is **single-family** compared with 59% in the Providence MSA, and **75%** of all housing stock is owner occupied.<sup>1</sup>

Between 2000 and 2013, there has been a **4% increase** in housing units over all (+483 units), but a decline in structures with **5 or more units** (-95 units).<sup>2</sup>

Since the 2008 update, housing production has tapered off. Between 2010 and 2014, 174 new residential units were permitted: **138 single-family structures** and **36 units in 2-4 family structures**.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 32. Housing type, 2013 <sup>2</sup>

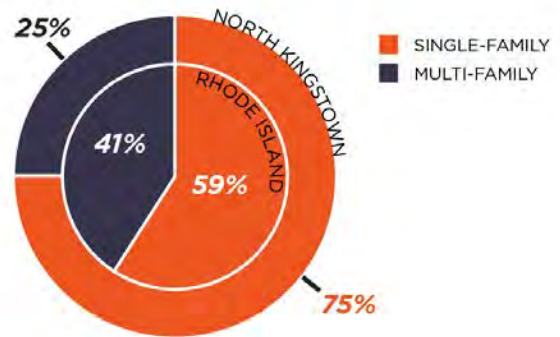


Figure 33. Housing production, 2000-2014 <sup>3</sup>

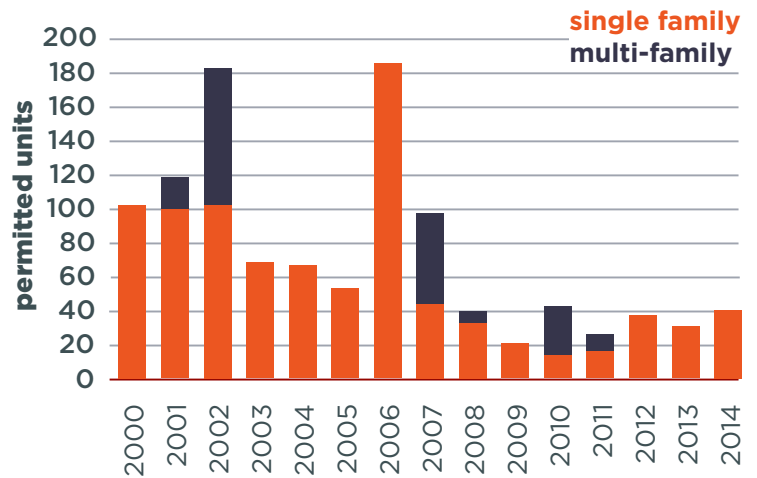
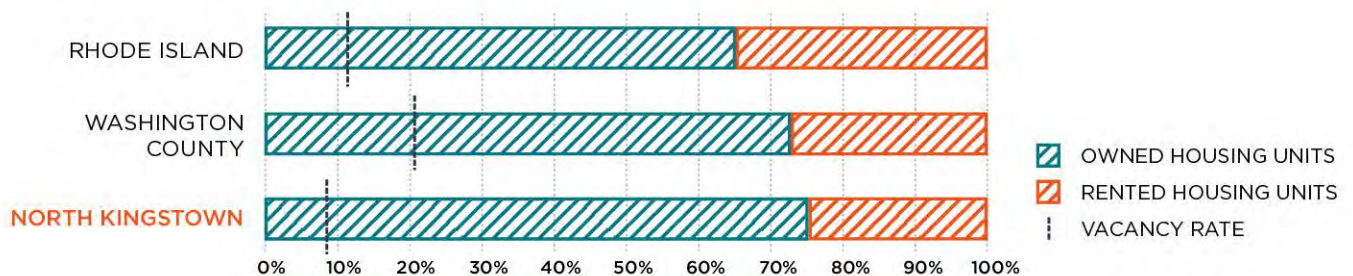



Figure 34. Housing tenure, 2013 <sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup> 2010 Census; <sup>2</sup> 2013 ACS; <sup>3</sup> Town of North Kingstown.

## North Kingstown provides more affordable housing than other Washington County towns.

**32%** of all households are **cost-burdened** and **66%** of all low- and moderate- income (LMI) households are **cost-burdened**.<sup>4</sup>



**Cost-burdened** households spend more than a **third** of their income on housing costs

A household must earn at least **\$98,066/ year** to purchase a median priced home,<sup>5</sup> while the median household income was **\$80,530/year** in 2013.<sup>6</sup>

Rents have fluctuated over the last 10 years but average **10% higher** than State rents.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 35. Median sale price trend for single family home, 2003-2015<sup>7</sup>

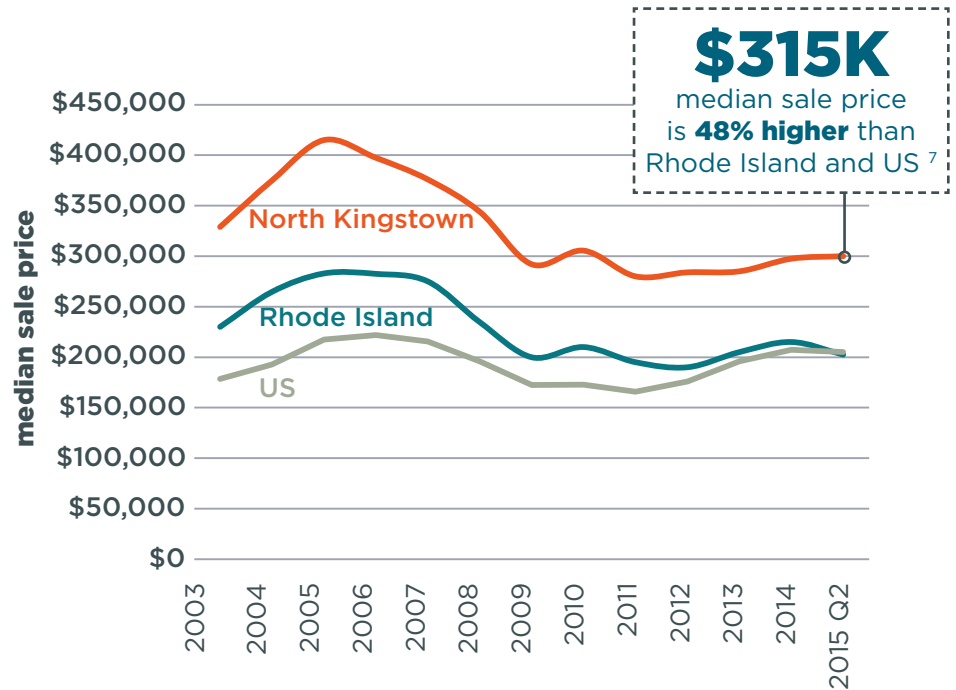
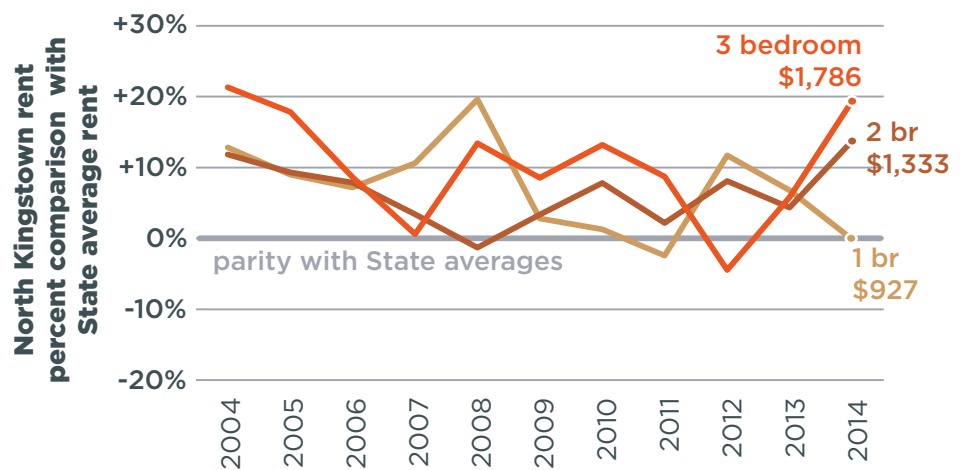


Figure 36. North Kingstown average rent, 2004-2014<sup>7</sup>



<sup>4</sup> 2012 American Housing Survey; <sup>5</sup> 2015 HousingWorks RI Housing Fact Book; <sup>6</sup> 2013 ACS; <sup>7</sup> RI Realtors Association and National Association of Realtors, riving.com, RI Housing Rent Survey and HousingWorks RI 2015 Housing Fact Book.

## North Kingstown's affordable housing strategies

North Kingstown has maintained steady progress toward the 10% affordable housing goal in the State of Rhode Island (RIGL, 45-53) and has the highest percentage of affordable housing of any community in Washington County, over at 8.1%. Currently, North Kingstown needs an additional 206 affordable units to meet the 10% threshold given its existing 10,953 year-round housing units of which 883 are affordable units. Under current zoning, it is anticipated that future build out over the next 20 years will add 700 units for a year-round total of 11,653. To meet the 10% threshold for this new figure, 276 additional affordable units will be needed over the next 20 years for a total of 1,165 affordable units.

North Kingstown continues to mandate and incentivize affordable housing creation through the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The town's most successful strategy mandates inclusionary zoning of 10% in any development creating five new dwelling units. The town's special districts require additional affordable housing. These districts include Post Road, Compact Village Development, and Wickford Junction.

The Wickford Junction district was approved in January 2014. The district has an underlying density of one unit per two acres but allows a developer to obtain 30 units per acre with the use of transfer of development rights (TDRs). The district requires a minimum of 15% affordable housing. Off site locations can be used to satisfy this requirement. Affordable units that make up less than 20% of the units of a development in this district are "free" to a developer as they do not require purchasing development rights, which is required of all market rate units over the underlying two acre zoning.

In the Post Road district, a developer is required to include 10% affordable housing if proposing four units per acre or under. If a developer proposes a density of 10 units per acre, they are required to include 20% affordable housing. If a developer proposes 30 units per acre, they are required to use TDRs and 15% affordable housing. North Kingstown

has not yet seen any affordable housing produced in conjunction with the transfer and purchase of development rights.

North Kingstown has added a number of affordable units through the comprehensive permit process established under RIGL 45-23. There are currently 84 housing units (36 senior rental, 38 family rental, 10 owner occupied) of affordable housing identified within the Rhode Island Housing Low and Moderate Income Homes tabulation that were permitted through this process. The town has one rental unit permitted as a comprehensive permit under construction which will also qualify as an affordable unit once it receives its certificate of occupancy. This strategy is highly successful in North Kingstown. The town has been able to undergo a "friendly" comprehensive permit process whereby the applicant works with the town and its Planning Commission to mold a project to meet the desires of all parties involved.

In addition, North Kingstown allows for accessory units through the special use permit process. The sale price of the unit is not restricted; therefore, these units do not qualify as affordable via the state law. The units are affordable due to the limitations in size. Accessory units must be under the same ownership as the primary unit on the site. The units can be rented to the general public and assist us in providing housing to the rental, elderly, special needs, and other similar populations looking for smaller accommodations. Many times these units also offer social assistance due to the interaction of the primary homeowner and the accessory unit occupant. This strategy is also highly successful.

In May 2014, North Kingstown adopted an adaptive apartment ordinance, with the intent of providing opportunities for unpermitted apartments to be brought into compliance and to gain affordable housing within the town. In addition to obtaining proper building permits, a dwelling that does not qualify as a lawful nonconforming use or structure may be granted a special use permit for occupancy



as an adaptive apartment unit if in compliance with specific development standards.

The success of existing affordable housing strategies has been impacted by the housing market. Several inclusionary housing projects have been in the pipeline since the housing crisis in 2008/2009, and are only recently moving forward. Also changing demographics and housing preferences are impacting the desired housing product. Rental housing and smaller units are more in demand than for sale or single family housing, and the 4ward market study indicated affordable housing is most needed for the senior and workforce populations. As market rate housing in North Kingstown is relatively affordable, it has been difficult to sell deed restricted affordable units. North Kingstown is analyzing the merits of the existing strategies in relation to the needs of the housing market and if needed, will propose alternative incentives to ensure we continue to provide housing that meets the needs of each population.

Through this Comprehensive Plan re-write, the Town will also investigate additional measures beyond new development. This includes working with local community development corporations and non-profits to convert existing structures into deed restricted affordable units which would increase the percentage of affordable units without increasing the total number of housing units. The town is also re-writing its zoning code and considering how to incorporate the “small house” movement and accessory units to add smaller units to our affordable housing inventory. North Kingstown will continue to identify areas that could support a variety of housing types. The town will analyze the existing affordable homes that are not deed restricted to understand the variety of choices available. In addition, the town continues to work alongside the state to continue progress and improvements to the affordable housing program.

We will continue to implement these strategies to meet our affordable housing goals. It is anticipated that through these measures, the Town of North Kingstown will be able to meet the 10% threshold over the course of the next 20 years though a combination of comprehensive permitting (30%), inclusionary units from new development (60%), and all other strategies (10%).

For additional data and detailed affordable housing strategies, please see the Appendix.



Belleville House



Reynolds Farm



North Cove Landing

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update, the Town of North Kingstown has initiated the following projects and programs:

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 11 units proposed through the comprehensive permit process
- 1 unit constructed and 160 units permitted or in review through the inclusionary program
- 1 unit approved through adaptive apartment ordinance
- Reynolds Farm (20% inclusionary, 600+ units total, mixed income)
- Belleville House (40 units for very low income seniors)
- Kingstown Crossing (all affordable, 104 units of multifamily units with daycare and community center)
- Cold Spring Farm (7 units total, 2 affordable in converted historic home)
- North Ridge (12 units total, 3 affordable in smaller scale than typical North Kingstown housing)
- Wickford Cove Condos (16 units total, 4 affordable with mix of sizes)
- Wickford Landing (3 units, 1 affordable in rehabilitated housing)
- North Cove Landing (all affordable, 38 units with mix of bedroom counts)

## OTHER AFFORDABLE BELOW \$300,000

- 4,172 single family homes under \$300,000

- 476 residential condos under \$300,000
- 250 mobile homes with average value of \$17,336

## REGULATIONS

- Transfer of Development Rights
- Compact Village Development ordinance
- Wickford Junction Transit-Oriented Development
- Post Road ordinance
- Inclusionary zoning
- Adaptive apartment ordinance

## PLANS/STUDIES

- North Kingstown Community Market Study
- Transfer of Development Rights and Identification of Village Centers reports

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- Water Service Area update
- Groundwater Overlay update
- Post Road sewer installation

## OTHER

- Introduction of legislation to include mobile and manufactured homes as low and moderate income housing

# KEY PUBLIC INPUT

Residents love the historic character and natural amenities of North Kingstown and worry that too much residential development will have a negative impact on the qualities they most value. As a result, the majority of survey respondents (55%) want to keep residential development at the same level, while 31% want less residential development.

Nevertheless, public input gathered through the forums, online activities and interviews indicates that public sentiment is more nuanced and that changing demographics should be considered to develop different types of housing products and programs that address the needs of the local workforce,

millennials and seniors. Participants reviewing the plan goals, policies, and actions at the final public forum and online chose transit-oriented, walkable housing, senior housing and workforce housing as a top ten priority.

Residents also indicated that neighborhoods should be better connected to each other and destinations, and that groundwater and watershed protection, climate adaptation, and infrastructure should be taken in account when developing housing.

“There are a lot of good jobs in Quonset Point, which is attracting working people and their families.”

**HOUSING RANKS LOWER ON THE LIST OF PRIORITIES AND DESIRED DEVELOPMENT. MORE DIVERSE OPTIONS ARE DESIRED.**

**36%** say **RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT** is a **MAJOR CONCERN**

**25%** say **PROMOTE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT** is the most important action to **MANAGE LAND USE**

**21%** think **TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT** should be a **PRIORITY**

55% want **SAME**  
31% want **LESS**

“Target affordable housing for seniors being taxed out of their homes...”

**WHAT KIND OF DEVELOPMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN NORTH KINGSTOWN?**

- 15% want to see **SENIOR HOUSING**
- 9% want to see **SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING**
- 6% want to see **APARTMENT HOUSING**

“alternative housing developments beyond the typical cul-de-sac with 400K homes”

Figure 37. Survey responses regarding housing.

# GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 1:  
**PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING CHOICES**

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

**2.1 Encourage the development of new owner-occupied and rental housing to meet the needs of a changing population and support economic growth at Quonset.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	2.1.a	Regulate the development of transit-oriented, multifamily housing where infrastructure exists.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	RIPTA, RIDOT, developers
★	2.1.b	Pursue the development of senior housing that accommodates adaptability and is accessible to public transportation and community services.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	CDBG, non-profits, developers
★	2.1.c	Work with developers to provide workforce housing that supports job growth associated with Quonset and large local businesses.	EDA	1 to 3 years	Staff time, CDBG, potential grants

CDBG=Community Development Block Grant, RIPTA=Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation

## WHAT IS TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT?

Transit oriented development (TOD) is compact, walkable, community development centered around transit stations. TOD typically includes a mix of housing, office, retail, and other amenities that encourage transit ridership, increase mobility choices and reduce car dependency for those who can not or prefer not to drive.



Rockville, MD

**2.1 Encourage the development of new owner-occupied and rental housing to meet the needs of a changing population and support economic growth at Quonset.** (continued)

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	2.1.d	Identify areas that could support a mix of housing types and investigate alternative housing types to encourage greater variety.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Staff time
	2.1.e	Establish and maintain an inventory of affordable housing in town beyond the units that currently meet the state’s regulatory definition of Low and Moderate Income Housing (inventory housing that is affordable but not deed restricted).	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time

**2.2 Continue to develop deed restricted affordable and supportive housing for households earning less than 120% of area median income to meet State requirements and respond to the shortage of local affordable housing opportunities.**

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	2.2.a	Assess housing demand in concert with the state’s housing needs database, develop affordable housing strategies and monitor progress.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	Staff time
	2.2.b	Create and expand tools and incentives including but not limited to inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, a housing trust fund that provides funds through low-interest loans or gap financing, and development practices that would encourage developers of new subdivisions to create mixed income rental and ownership housing.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	Staff time
★	2.2.c	Work with Washington County CDC and non-profit organizations to meet town’s affordable housing goals.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time, non-profits, developers

**2.2 Continue to develop deed restricted affordable and supportive housing for households earning less than 120% of area median income to meet State requirements and respond to the shortage of local affordable housing opportunities.** (continued)

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	2.2.d	Partner with legislators for inclusion of mobile homes towards affordable units.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	Staff time
	2.2.e	Study the market viability of the town’s zoning codes and study the effects of the codes on the affordability of housing within North Kingstown.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
★	2.2.f	Work with the state administration to allow for more flexibility to qualify affordable units.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
	2.2.g	Participate in state wide discussions regarding affordable housing strategies.	Planning Commission/ Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time
	2.2.h	Hold workshops and conduct other public outreach on affordable housing options available in the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	Staff time
	2.2.i	Analyze the success of the town’s affordable housing strategies in relation to future population needs.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time

**WHAT IS A HOUSING TRUST FUND?**

A housing trust fund provides locally targeted assistance to develop affordable housing through low-interest loans, transfer of development rights, payments in lieu of taxes, or gap financing. Revenue sources may include local real estate transfer taxes, real-estate fees and penalties. The Town of Barrington established an Affordable Housing Trust Fund and Housing Board of Trustees to work with nonprofit developers to capture existing housing stock, deed restrict, and re-sell to count toward the 10% affordable housing goal.



Barrington, RI

## 2.3 Maintain and improve existing town housing stock.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PPARTNER AGENCIES
	2.3.a	Enforce the building code and encourage property owners to adequately maintain and rehabilitate housing.	Building Official	Ongoing	Staff time, developers
★	2.3.b	Develop and implement programs to help people maintain and stay in their homes including but not limited to the Home Repair Program and age-in-place programs that may assist with home retrofits and repair, floodproofing, energy and water saving measures, and tax relief.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	Staff time, USDA Home Repair grants, RI Housing, FEMA Hazard Mitigation assistance, developers

FEMA=Federal Emergency Management Agency, USDA=United States Dept. of Agriculture

GOAL 2:

## ENCOURAGE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AWAY FROM ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSTRAINED AND SENSITIVE AREAS THAT REFLECTS TOWN CHARACTER AND SUPPORTS WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

## 2.4 Encourage development of compact, connected neighborhoods that preserve open space, protect groundwater, and support walking and biking.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
★	2.4.a	Use conservation development and low impact development standards to preserve open space, facilitate stormwater management, protect surface water and groundwater resources, maintain town character, and maximize the use and efficiency of existing infrastructure and alternative modes of transportation.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	Staff time, developers
★	2.4.b	Adopt Complete Streets design including safe walking paths in new development and redevelopment.	Planning Department	Ongoing	Staff time, RIDOT, RIPTA, developers

RIPTA=Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation



## WHAT IS CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT?

Conservation development is an approach to development that aims to minimize impacts to the environment, protect natural resources and preserve community character by using flexibility in siting and infrastructure to preserve a minimum of 30%-75% of the land in conservation as meaningful open space and encourage the development of a connected greenway.

For more information, see Article IX-Conservation Developments of the town Zoning Ordinance and visit GrowSmartRI: <http://www.growsmartri.org/ri-ordinances/conservation-development/>



North Cove Landing, North Kingstown



Rain garden



Green roof



Rain barrel



Permeable pavement

## WHAT IS LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT?

Low impact development (LID) is an approach to development that aims to protect water quality and watersheds by using or mimicking natural processes to manage stormwater locally. LID techniques include preserving or recreating natural landscape features and reducing impervious surfaces. Residential LID practices include rain gardens, green roofs, rain barrels, and permeable pavement.



# A CONNECTED TOWN

A plan for CIRCULATION

---

ELEMENT  
3

## VISION

We are a **connected** town no matter how you choose to get around.

North Kingstown will provide a well-maintained and efficient transportation road network and encourage alternative transportation options, including walking, biking, and public transit, to ensure safe, healthy, and convenient access to local and regional destinations.

---

## GOALS

1. Design safer and more attractive roadways for all users
2. Promote alternative transportation options for better local and regional connections
3. Upgrade and maintain transportation infrastructure

# OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES

**Great improvements to alternative transportation in North Kingstown have been made but better connections and better service are needed to maximize its potential.**

## Transit

The extension of Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail to Wickford Junction in 2012 has opened up new transportation options, connecting North Kingstown to Providence, T. F. Green Airport, and Boston. Travel time is 35 minutes to Providence and 98 minutes to Boston, however; service is infrequent with 10 trains in each direction that are limited to weekdays.

Ridership at the train station has been low but has been growing slowly with approximately 517 trips to and from Wickford Junction per day with 131,191 annual trips to and from Wickford Junction in FY2019. Original projections call for 1,500 riders by 2020.<sup>1</sup> However, recent initiatives and future plans are expected to help increase ridership at Wickford Junction. In December of 2015, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) consolidated bus service at an improved multimodal Wickford Junction Transit Center that places bus and train service together and triples service levels while reducing operating costs.

The Rhode Island State Rail Plan 2014 discusses commuter rail service within Rhode Island (between Wickford Junction and Providence via T. F. Green Airport) with more frequent headways that could increase ridership to as many as 3,400 per day. The State Rail Plan also references studies that looked at extending service within Rhode Island with other stations, including West Davisville, which would better serve the employment center of North Kingstown.

<sup>1</sup> Anderson, Patrick, (August 25, 2015). "R.I. transportation officials say taking over Wickford rail station 'no-brainer'." Providence Journal. Retrieved March 2, 2016.

## Transit

**Providence-Stoughton line** - travels from Boston to Wickford Junction 10 times per day on weekdays.

**RIPTA bus routes** - 14 (Newport Express), 64 (Kingston Station), 65X (Wakefield Express), 66 (URI/Galilee), 62 (URI/Providence Station)

## Quonset

**Freight Rail** - over 14 miles of intra-park rail connects to the national rail network through Rhode Island's Freight Rail Improvement Project track.

**Quonset State Airport** - a public use facility that connects with port, road, and rail systems in the industrial park.

**Port of Davisville** - a top auto and frozen seafood port with four berths, five terminals, laydown and terminal storage.

**Martha's Vineyard Fast Ferry** - twice daily passenger service to Martha's Vineyard from May to October, with additional trips during peak times.

## Freight

Freight is handled through the Quonset rail system and Port of Davisville for automobiles and frozen seafood. Quonset's freight infrastructure connects to the national rail network and to Interstate 95 via Route 403 and 4.



This maps shows North Kingstown's transportation network, including transit and bike facilities.

Figure 38. Transportation network map

## Community connections

North Kingstown's central location and roadway system provide excellent local and regional access to major traffic generators such as shopping centers, job centers and areas of growth [see figure 39]. Providence is only 20 minutes away by car or 35 minutes by train, making North Kingstown a convenient place to live and an excellent location for businesses with commuting employees.

As the number of jobs in North Kingstown have increased, the trend has been toward more North Kingstown residents working closer to home. On the flip side, more jobs means North Kingstown employers are drawing more workers from farther away.

While getting around town is convenient by car, the same cannot be said for other modes of travel. Transit access (defined as a 10-minute walk or 1/2 mile) is good in existing and proposed densely populated areas such as Davisville and Wickford Junction [see figure 40]. However, public transit is disconnected with no service into Quonset, where the largest concentration of jobs are, and no bus service from Wickford Junction to other local destinations such as Quonset or Wickford Village. RIPTA completed a market study in November 2016 to identify and develop proposals for improving commuter access to the Quonset Business Park (QBP). The study explores several alternatives for improving transit access and provides guidance on enhancing other methods of transportation such as carpooling and vanpooling.

The bike and pedestrian network is also very limited and not connected. The only bike path in town is the Quonset Bike Path which offers an off-road connection from Post Road through Quonset Business Park to Calf Pasture Beach. Bike routes on Route 2 and Route 1A are signed but do not provide separate bike lanes. Additional bike and pedestrian connections are needed to connect major traffic generators and destinations at Quonset, Wickford Village and Wickford Junction. Post Road in particular has been identified as a road that was designed for much higher levels of car traffic than it currently sees and a priority for safer pedestrian and bike connections.

“It just doesn't connect.”

## Commuting patterns have shifted slightly as more people work closer to home and use alternative transportation.

Over **22,000 workers** commute in and out of North Kingstown for work,<sup>1</sup> but between 2000 and 2010, the percent of North Kingstown residents who worked in North Kingstown and adjacent communities increased from **42%** to **56%**, shortening their commute.<sup>2</sup>

**86%** of workers commute to work by **driving alone** but the use of **public transportation** has **increased** from **1%** in 2000 to **2%** in 2013. Biking and walking has **decreased** from **2%** in 2000 to **1%** in 2013.<sup>3</sup>

## More transportation options are needed to address the needs of a changing population.

There has been a **34% increase** in the number of **households without a vehicle**:

Between 2000-2013, the number of households without a vehicle rose from **280** to **374** households. This represents **4%** of all households. **Renter households** are **4.5 times** more likely to be without a vehicle.

**107** of the 374 households without a vehicle consist of **householders 65 and over**.<sup>3</sup>

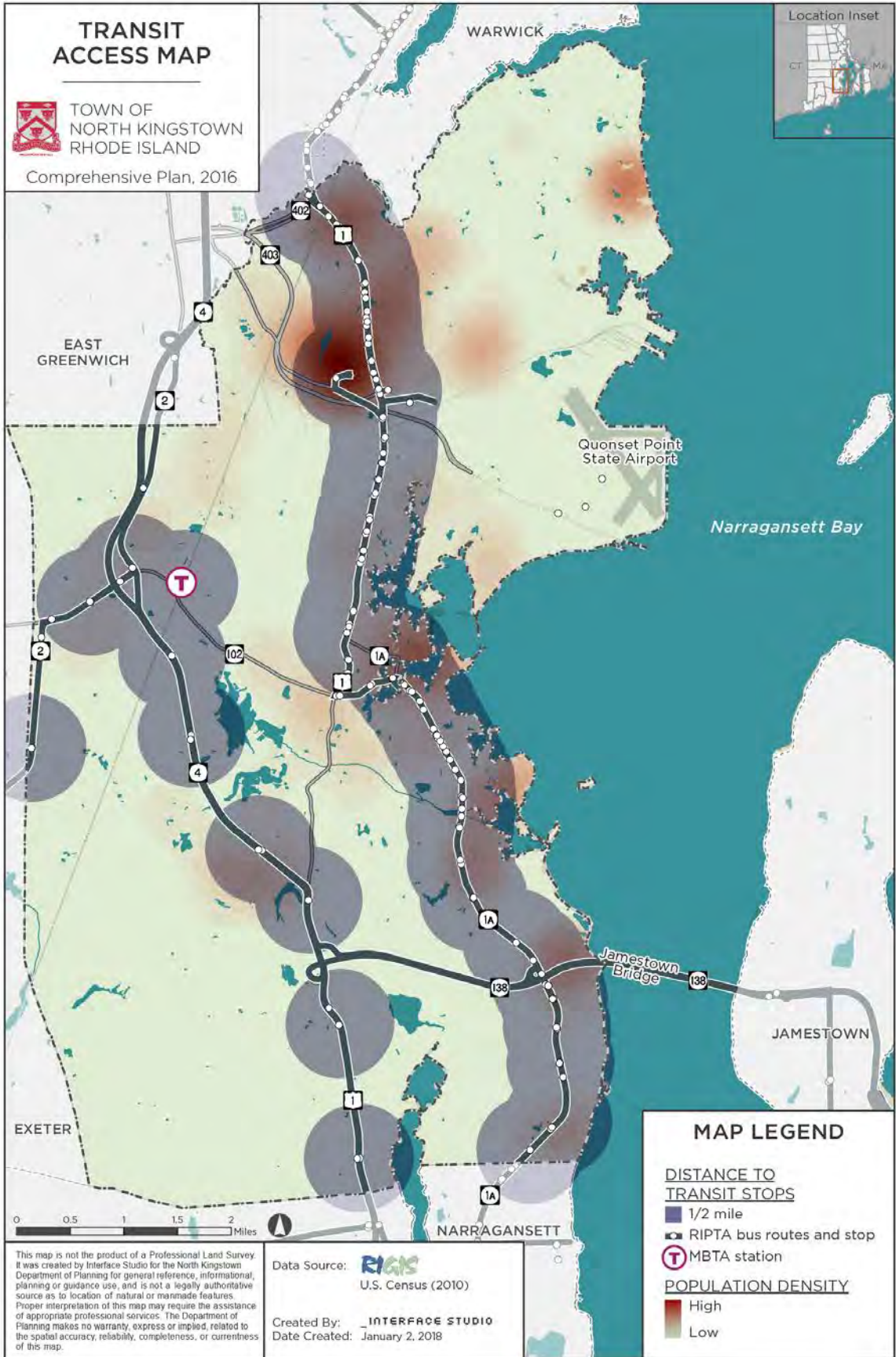
“It is important that we ensure that residents without cars or those in lower income housing are able to access schools and town resources easily.”

<sup>1</sup> Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) OnTheMap, 2013; <sup>2</sup> 2000 Journey to Work by Residential Community and 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS); <sup>3</sup> 2000 Census and 2013 ACS.



**Figure 39. Highway functional classification map**

This maps shows North Kingstown's major traffic generators and the roadway classification system that connects them.



Areas within the dark blue buffers are within 1/2 mile, or a 10-minute walk, from a transit stop.

Figure 40. Transit access map





## ACCOMPLISHMENTS | KEY PUBLIC INPUT

Since the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update, the following projects and programs have been initiated:

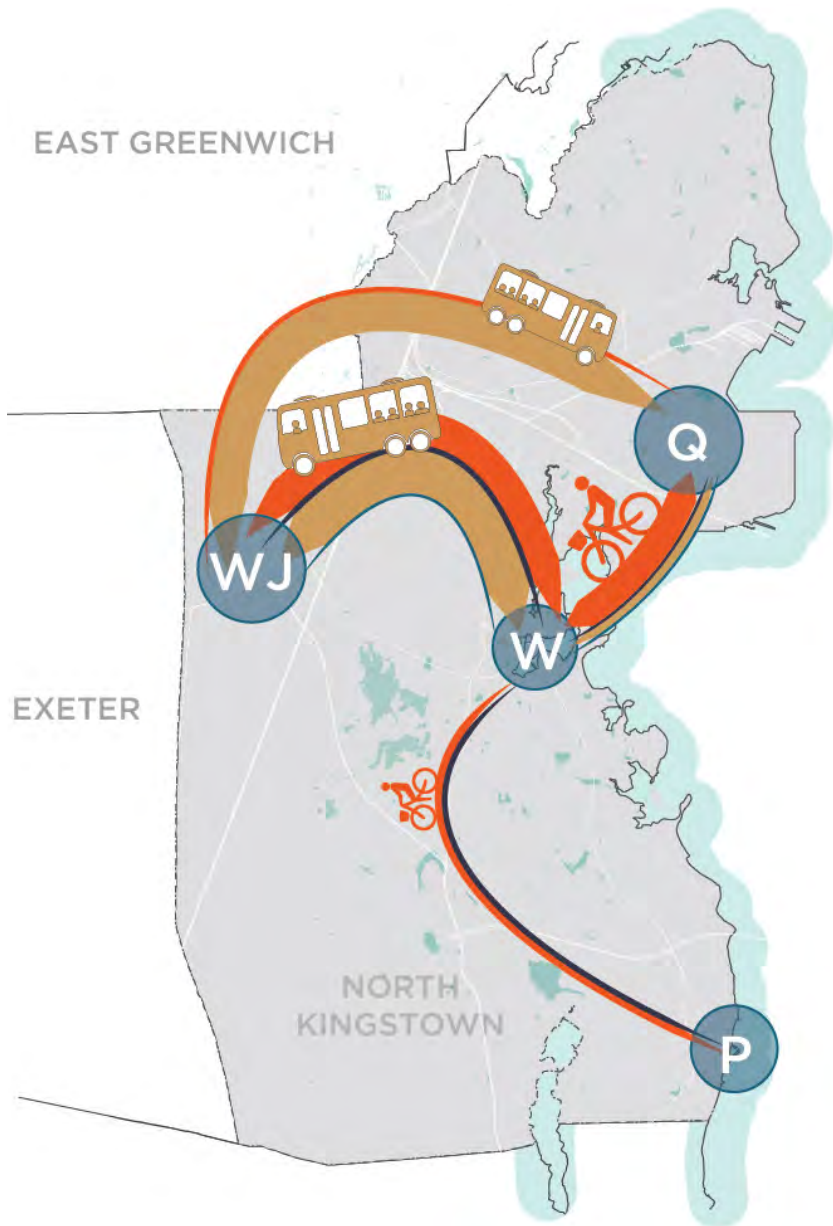
- Wickford Junction Transit Center
- Route 403
- Quonset Bike Path
- RIPTA market study for Quonset service improvements
- Pilot road diet for Post Road
- Wickford Junction train station

29% of the survey respondents said one of the best things about North Kingstown was its central location but deteriorating corridors and infrastructure were cited as concerns that contributed to the sense that North Kingstown was declining.

Current commuter rail service to Wickford Junction was seen as a “game changer” to some in our focus groups with great potential but insufficient by others.

53% of survey respondents see the need for more alternative transportation options, especially for walking and biking, and 28% think better rail service should be a priority.

Better connections between destinations are needed, especially between Wickford Village, Wickford Junction and Quonset.



“ Safe bike paths and internal bus transport makes sense and is sound fiscal planning. ”

**TOP THREE MISSING CONNECTIONS ARE...**

- 52%** Wickford & Wickford Jct
- 27%** Wickford Jct & Quonset
- 25%** Wickford & Quonset

From the public forum, more than a half of the participants pointed out Wickford and Wickford Junction are missing a connection.

- BIKE
- WALK
- TRANSIT
- SIGNAGE
- WICKFORD JUNCTION
- QUONSET
- WICKFORD
- PLUM BEACH POINT

Figure 41. Summary of public forum activity.

“ Make it easier to get around WITHOUT using a car. We need more bike paths and walking paths that connect key parts of the community. ”

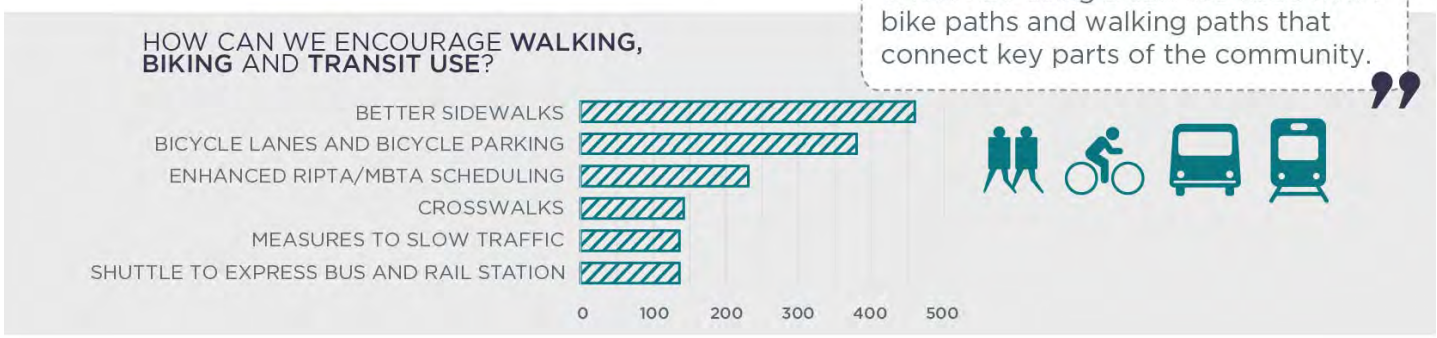


Figure 42. Survey responses regarding circulation.

# GOALS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

GOAL 1:

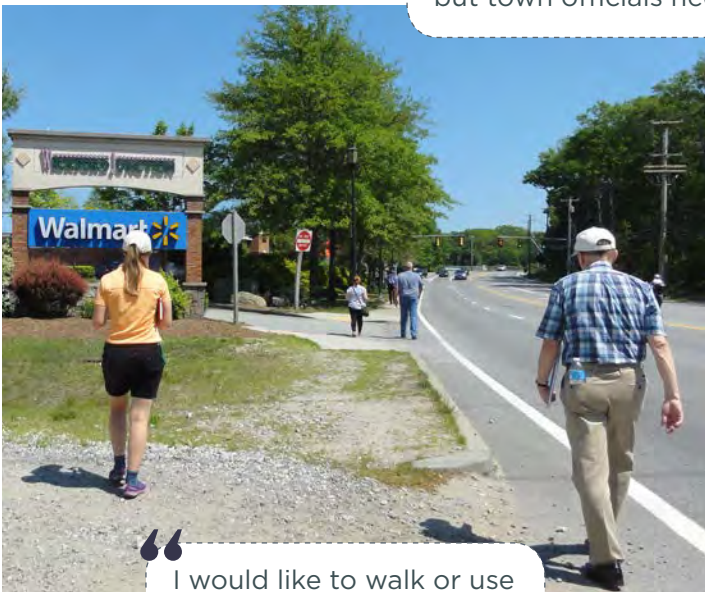
## DESIGN SAFER AND MORE ATTRACTIVE ROADWAYS FOR ALL USERS

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

### 3.1 Improve the safety and experience of North Kingstown roadways.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	3.1.a	Create a street safety plan through traffic enforcement, speed limits, street design, and public education.	Department of Public Works	1 to 3 years	Staff time, town budget, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
★	3.1.b	Adopt Complete Streets design and design standards in areas identified in the Transfer of Development Rights and Identification of Village Centers reports to ensure high quality multimodal circulation in new development and redevelopment proposals.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	RIDOT, town budget, FHWA, TIGER
★	3.1.c	Identify priority locations for pedestrian safety improvements and consider alternatives to traditional sidewalks, crosswalks, curbs and gutters, such as stamped asphalt, at-grade curb separated walkways, and landscaped stormwater management. Potential locations include but are not limited to: the Wickford Junction area, Post Road, Wickford, routes to schools and other institutions, and connections to transit.	Department of Public Works	1 to 3 years	Staff time, RIDOT
	3.1.d	Create streamlined application for an “Adopt-a-Road” program for town roads to encourage business owners, institutions, schools, civic and community groups to contribute to beautifying roadways.	Department of Public Works	5 to 7 years	Staff time, Adopt a Spot purchasers

“Connections could be made between commercial areas that don't require a car but town officials need to prioritize it...”



“I would like to walk or use a bicycle more but it is just extremely dangerous now.”



Walking tours of Ten Rod Road near Wickford Junction and Post Road highlighted the pedestrian conditions along these commercial corridors.

### EXAMPLES OF SIDEWALK ALTERNATIVES



At-grade curb separated walkway



Stamped asphalt



Stormwater management

FHWA=Federal Highway Administration, RIDOT=Rhode Island Dept. of Transportation, TIGER= Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery.

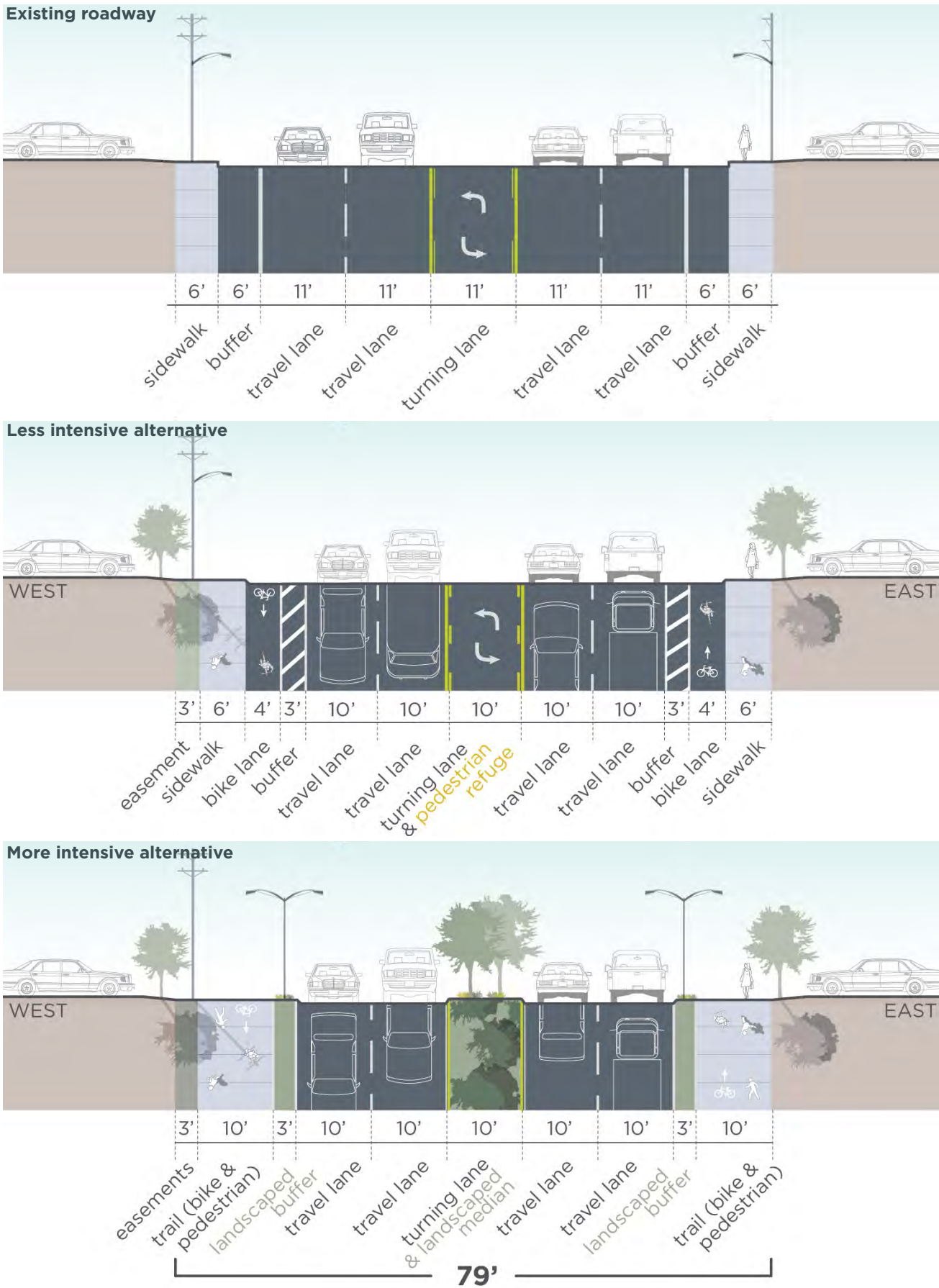
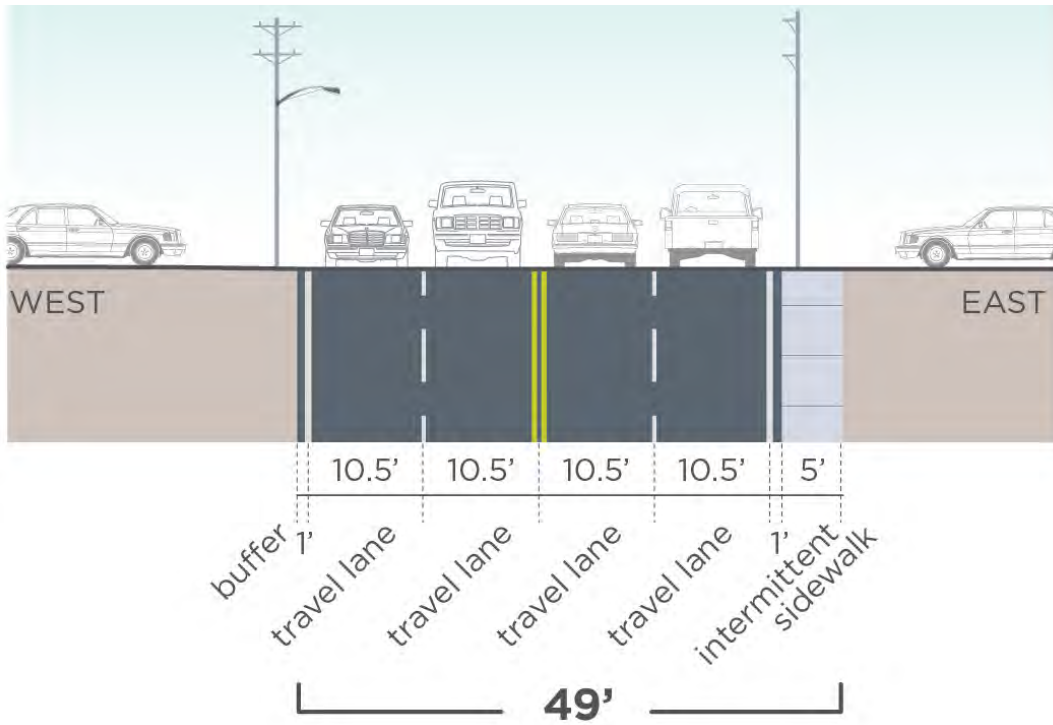
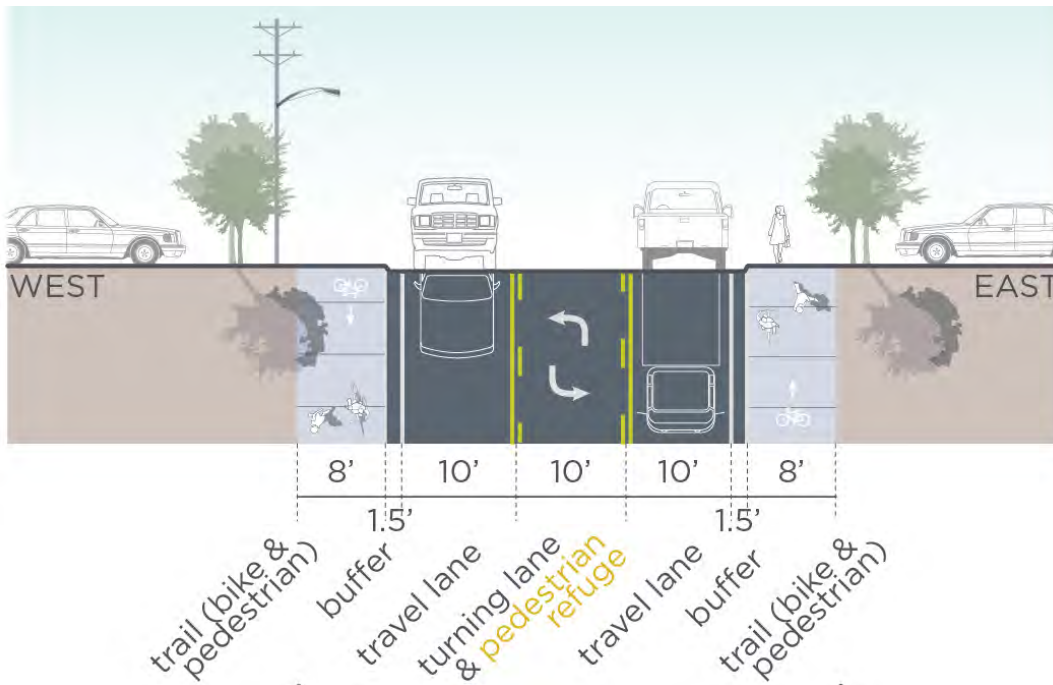


Figure 43. Proposed redesign of north Post Road.

**Existing roadway**



**Proposed roadway**



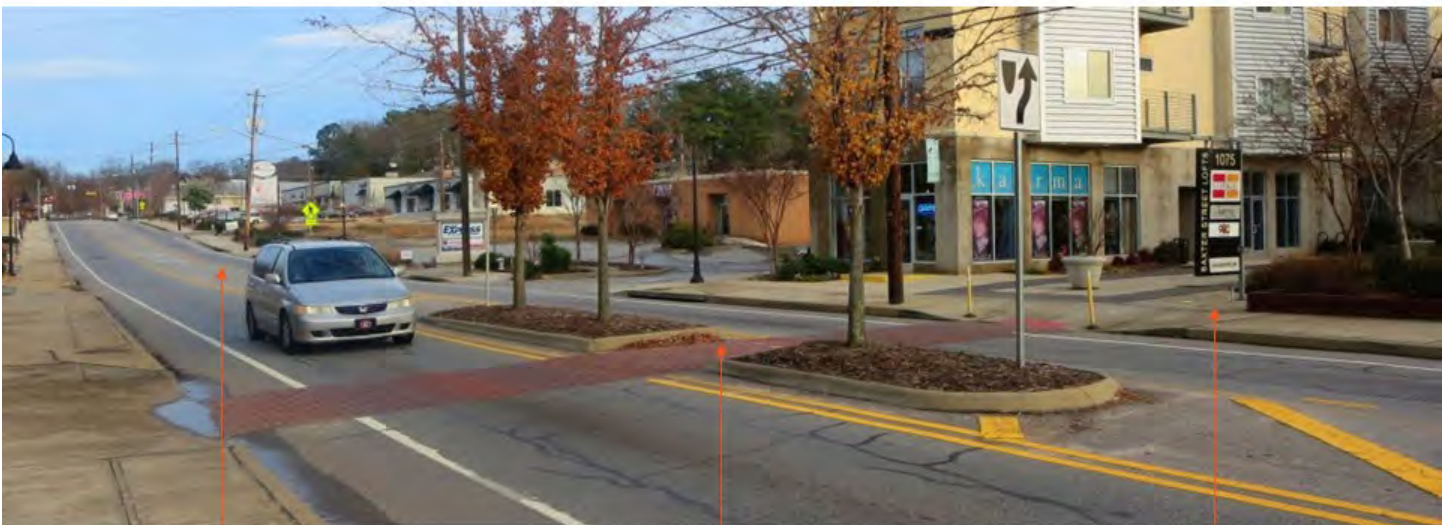
**Figure 44. Proposed road diet and redesign of south Post Road.**

# Complete Streets are good for business

safer, more attractive, more vibrant



South Post Road has no sidewalks or crosswalks. With no turning lane, cars turning left to access businesses increase the risk of rear end collisions. The stretch between Huling Road and Camp Avenue is particularly dangerous, accounting for 30% of the crashes along Post Road between 2008 and 2015.



LEFT TURN LANE



BETTER ACCESS TO BUSINESSES  
MORE EFFICIENT FLOW  
REDUCE COLLISION

PEDESTRIAN REFUGE  
+  
CROSSWALK



SAFER CROSSING  
BETTER ACCESS TO BUSINESSES

SIDEWALKS



INCREASED FOOT  
TRAFFIC

GOAL 2:

## PROMOTE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR BETTER LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

### 3.2 Improve and expand existing transportation options.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	3.2.a	Expand transit options by working with state agencies to establish a better schedule for the Wickford Junction train station, study the feasibility of connecting Wickford Junction to Wickford Village, Post Road and Quonset, and explore the feasibility of a future Davisville station.	Town Council	3 to 5 years	Economic Development Administration (EDA), Staff time, FHWA/ Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Quonset Development Corporation (QDC)
	3.2.b	Expand alternative transportation methods, including but not limited to carpooling, on-demand and senior car service, and private shuttle.	EDA	5 to 7 years	Town budget, staff time, RIPTA, QDC
★	3.2.c	Expand the bike network to connect neighborhoods with destinations, update and implement the Wickford to Quonset Bike Path Study, and install and maintain bike racks at town-owned destinations such as transit hubs, commercial centers, institutions, parks, and the waterfront.	Planning Department	1 to 3 years	RIDOT, RIDEM, Town budget

#### EXAMPLES OF BIKE FACILITIES



Buffered bike lane



Protected bike lane



Multi-use path

FHWA=Federal Highway Administration, RIPTA= Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, RIDOT=Rhode Island Dept. of Transportation, RIDEM=Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management



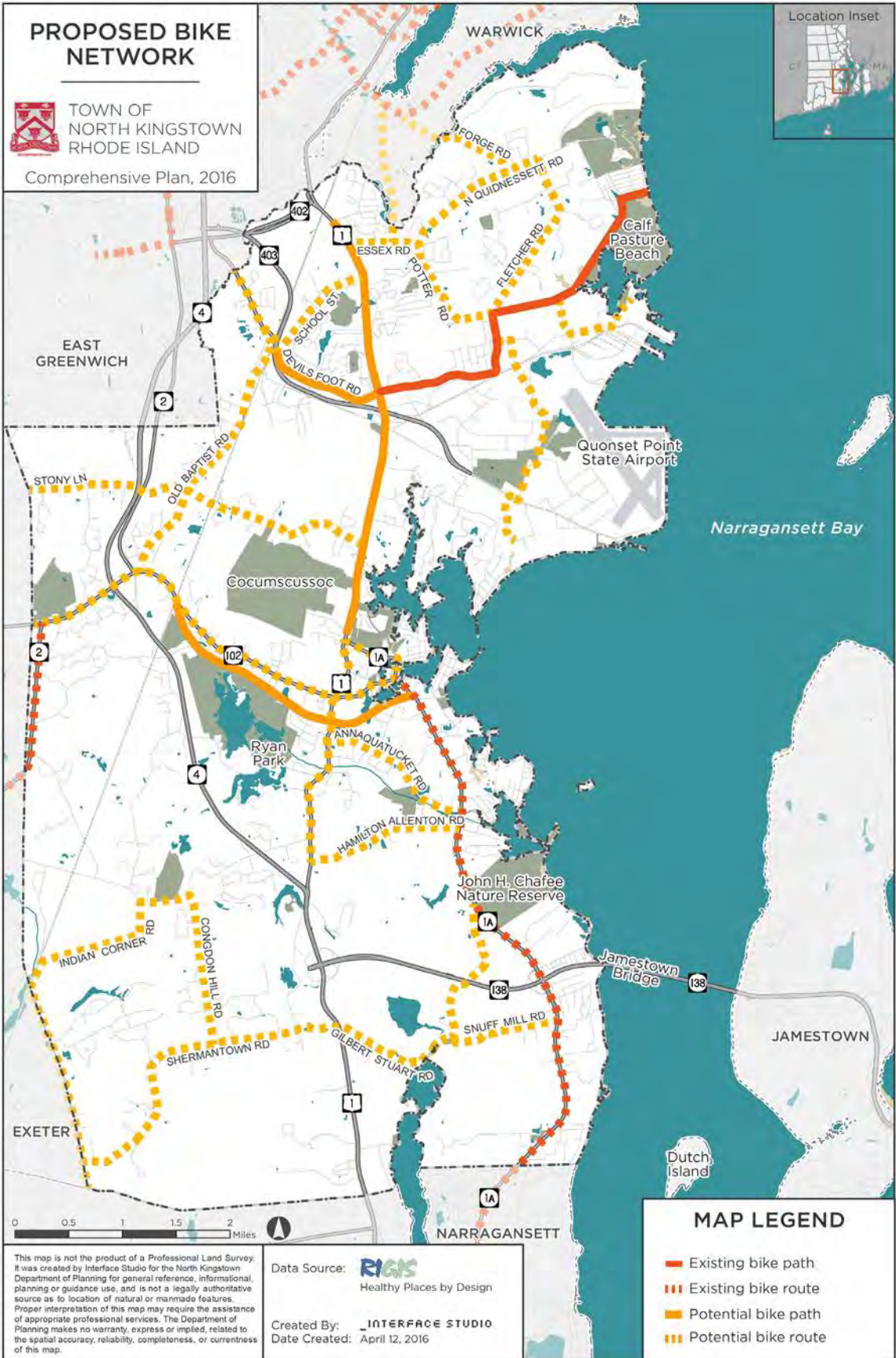


Figure 45. Proposed bike network map

Existing and proposed bike infrastructure system.

### 3.3 Support alternative transportation use.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	3.3.a	Participate in Bike to Work Day and Safe Routes to School activities.	Town Council	7 to 10 years	SPP, RIDOT, staff time and town budget
	3.3.b	Work with organizations and programs promoting alternative transportation.	Town Council	Ongoing	Staff time, town budget, grants
	3.3.c	Identify incentives to encourage commuting via alternative transportation.	Town Council	7 to 10 years	Staff time, state funding

SPP=Statewide Planning Program, RIDOT=Rhode Island Department of Transportation

#### WHAT IS THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM?

Safe Routes to School aims to create safe transportation alternatives for children to get to school by promoting walking and biking through physical and programmatic measures.

**CASE STUDY:** The Seattle Department of Transportation is planning 12 Safe Routes to School projects in 2016 to encourage students to walk and bike to school. Projects include infrastructure improvements such as trails, sidewalks, medians, curb bulb-outs, signals, and crosswalks. It also includes programs such as a Walking School Bus and Bike Trains where a few parents “pick up” students along the way to school to walk or bike together. The Safe Routes to School improvements have the added benefit of complementing and connecting neighborhood greenways.

The projects are funded through a nine-year transportation levy, a federal grant administered through the state DOT, and revenue from speed cameras around schools.

For more information:  
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/saferoutes.htm>



GOAL 3:

## UPGRADE AND MAINTAIN TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

POLICIES AND ACTIONS:

### 3.4 Ensure on-going safety and maintenance of transportation infrastructure.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	3.4.a	Implement the cyclical pavement management program.	Department of Public Works	Ongoing	TIP, town budget, Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
	3.4.b	Develop a comprehensive integrated transportation plan that includes priority implementation actions and link the top implementation actions to the town's TIP application for state/ federal monies.	Department of Public Works	5 to 7 years	TIP, town budget, Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

TIP= Transportation Improvement Program

### 3.5 Increase pedestrian and traffic safety.

PRIORITY	ACTION #	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME	PARTNER AGENCIES
	3.5.a	Amend Town of North Kingstown Land Development Regulations to encourage construction of adequate sidewalks within proposed developments with extensions to logical destinations or crossroads.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	Staff time
	3.5.b	Evaluate the potential use of impact fees or financial assistance from developers to pay for infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks.	Town Council	3 to 5 years	Staff time
	3.5.c	Undertake a sidewalk expansion program on Post Road and on other major arterial or feeder roads.	Town Council	1 to 3 years	TIP, town budget, Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
		o Encourage sidewalks and pedestrian paths along Post Road that connect adjacent commercial buildings and properties, as well as nearby parcels.	Planning Commission	Ongoing	TIP, town budget, Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
		o Require sidewalk or multiuse path construction adjacent to Post Road to facilitate pedestrian connections to bus stops.	Planning Commission	1 to 3 years	TIP, town budget, Capital Improvement Program (CIP)



# A SUSTAINABLE TOWN

A plan for OPEN SPACE, RECREATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

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ELEMENT

4

## VISION

We are a **healthy** and **sustainable** town that invests in **protecting our natural resources and open space** for their economic, environmental, recreational, and scenic value.

North Kingstown will protect its natural resources and provide a range of recreational opportunities that enhance the quality of life and the health of all residents, as well as contribute to a healthy ecosystem through the preservation of open spaces and the integration of climate and flood resiliency.

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## GOALS

1. Protect, preserve, and restore natural resources
2. Promote sustainable water and energy measures to conserve resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
3. Increase public awareness of conservation and sustainability
4. Provide high quality recreation facilities and opportunities for all residents
5. Enhance public access to active open space, recreation areas and the waterfront

# OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES

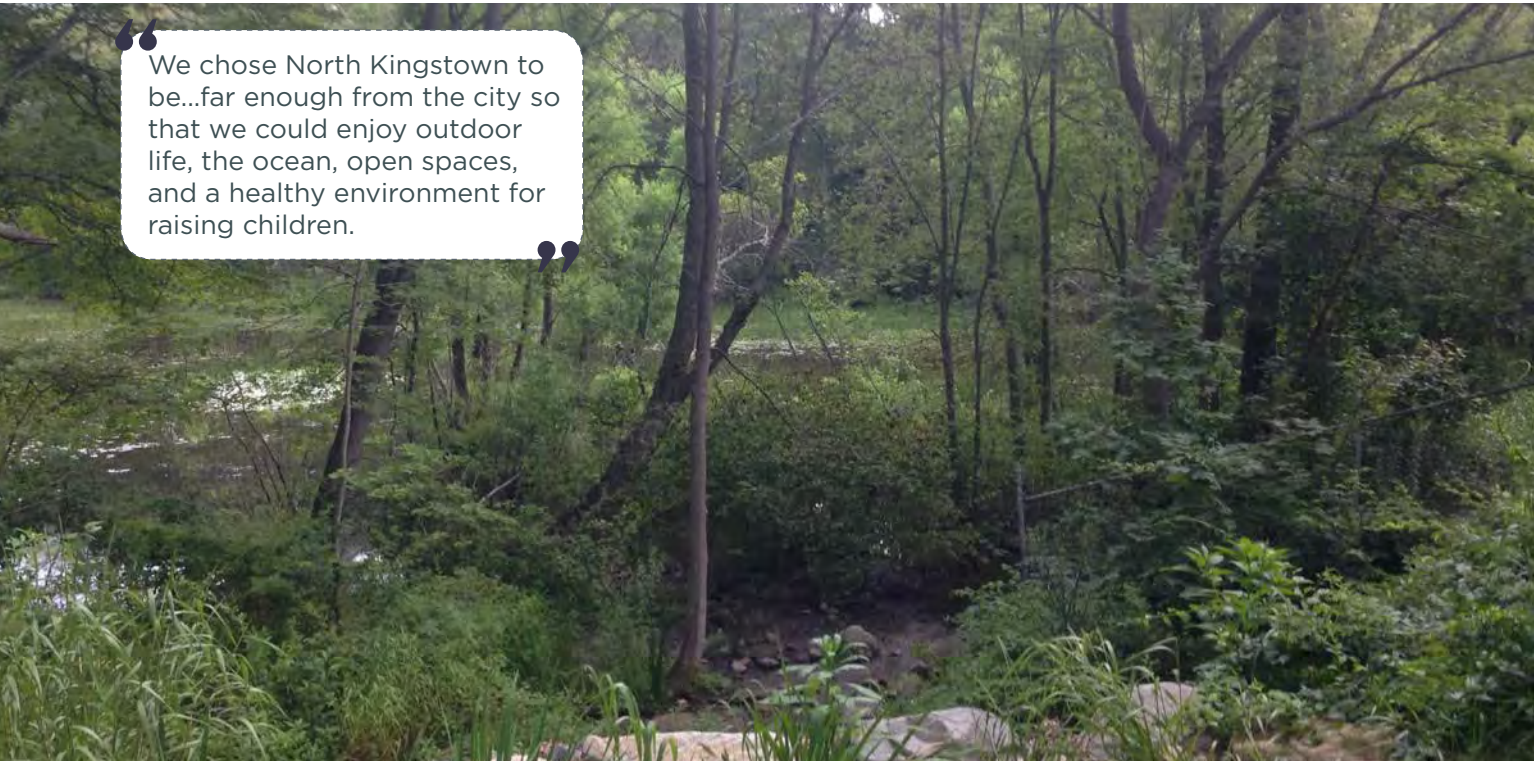
North Kingstown’s natural beauty is an important element of the town’s character and is highly valued by residents. The conservation of open space is important to protect this character as well as protect natural resources to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Additionally, the town’s abundant open space offers unique recreational opportunities, particularly along the Narragansett Bay.

## Open space conservation and natural resource protection

A healthy ecosystem needs biodiversity and is essential to our clean air, water, and food supply. North Kingstown’s natural resources include forests, wetlands and salt marshes, surface and groundwater

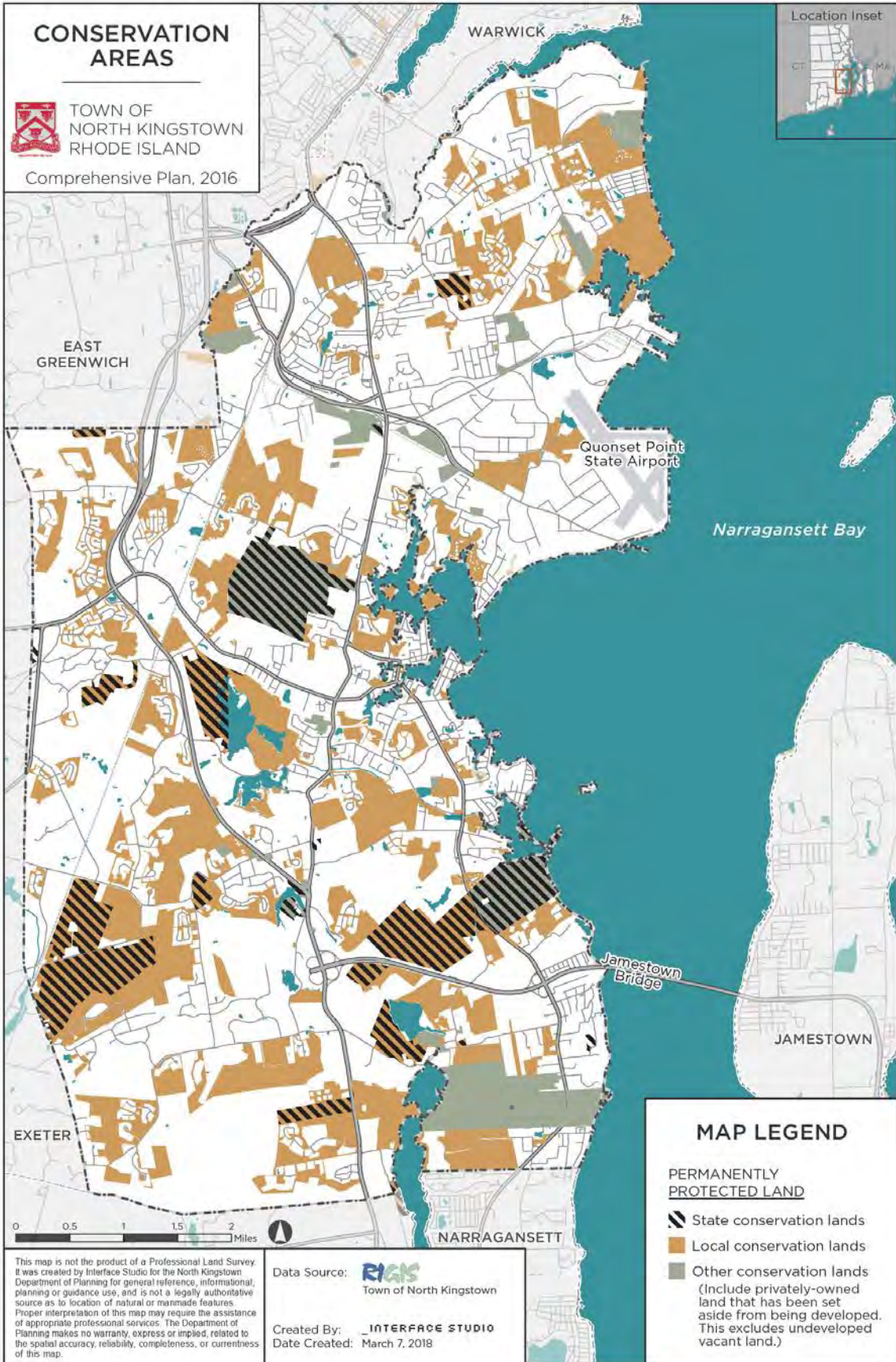
bodies, and wildlife all of which play a key role in providing ecosystem services such as pollination, decomposition, water purification, erosion and flood control, and carbon storage and climate regulation.

The town’s policies and regulations regarding development serve to preserve open space and protect natural resources. The town has programs that include a combination of acquisition, purchase and transfer of development rights, and conservation easements to preserve open space, especially around important water resources. The conservation areas, as shown in the map in Figure 46, are permanently protected and decisions regarding land conservation consider criteria such as protecting water resources and natural habitats [see Figures 47 and 48].



“ We chose North Kingstown to be...far enough from the city so that we could enjoy outdoor life, the ocean, open spaces, and a healthy environment for raising children. ”

Saw Mill Pond



This map shows permanently protected conservation areas by ownership.

\*Casey Farm is owned by Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

Figure 46. Conservation areas map

## RIDEM Groundwater Classifications

Groundwater classified **GAA** are groundwater resources that are known or presumed to be suitable for drinking water use without treatment and are located in one of the three areas described below. Groundwater classified GAA includes the following:

- a. The state's major stratified drift aquifers that are capable of serving as a significant source for a public water supply ("groundwater reservoirs") and the critical portion of their recharge area as delineated by DEM;
- b. The wellhead protection area for each public water system community water supply well. Community water supply wells are those that serve resident populations and have at least 15 service connections or serve at least 25 individuals, e.g., municipal wells and wells serving nursing homes, condominiums, mobile home parks, etc.; and
- c. Groundwater dependent areas that are physically isolated from reasonable alternative water supplies and where the existing groundwater warrants the highest level of protection. At present, only Block Island has been designated as meeting this criterion.

Groundwater classified **GA** are groundwater resources, which like GAA, are known or presumed to be suitable for drinking water use without treatment. However, groundwater classified GA does not fall within any of the three priority areas described above under GAA.

Groundwater classified **GB** is that groundwater which may not be suitable for drinking water use without treatment due to known or presumed degradation. DEM relied on data from known sources of contamination and land use information for the GB delineation. The areas where the groundwater is classified GB are served by public water systems.

Groundwater classified GB is located beneath the following:

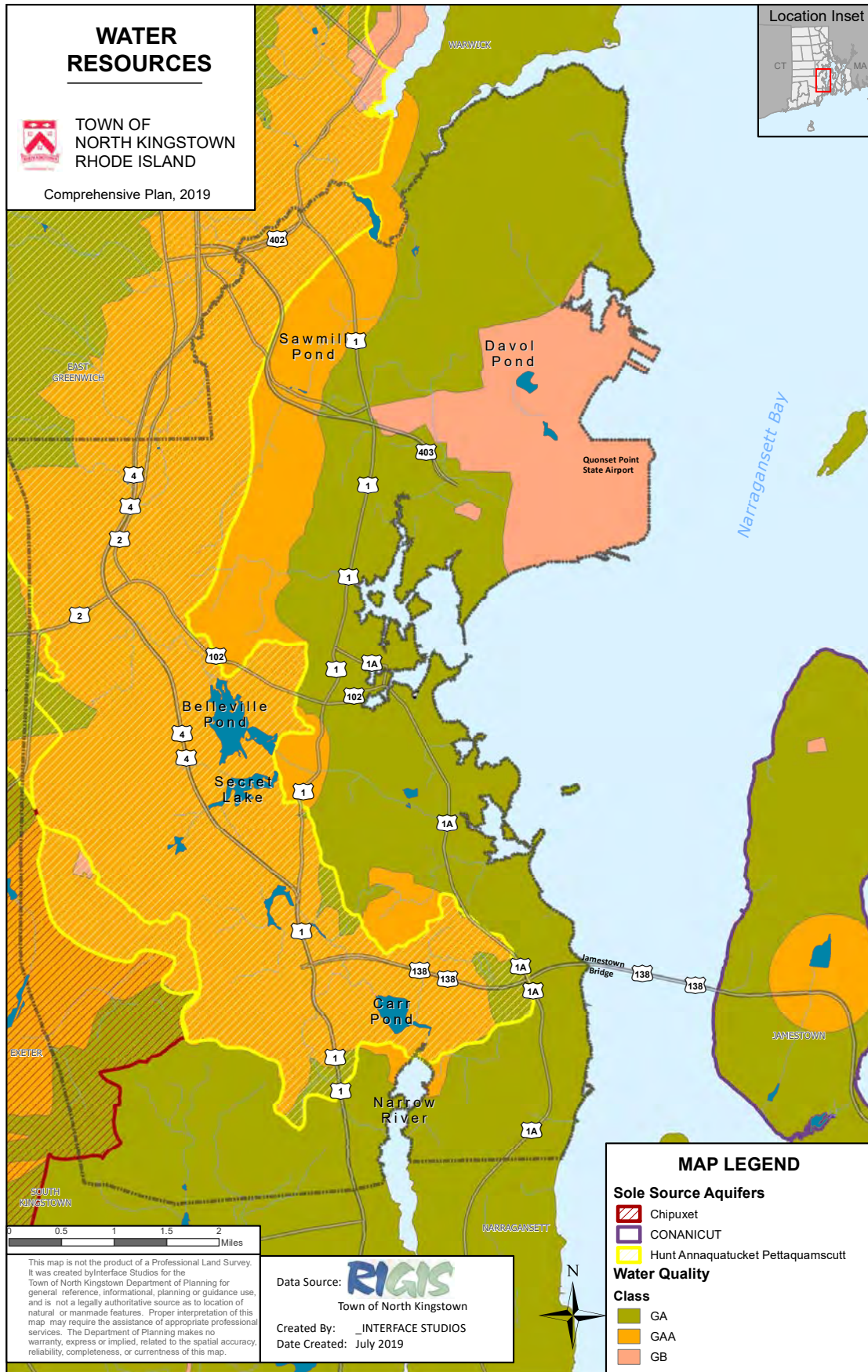
- d. Highly urbanized areas of the state, primarily those areas with dense concentrations of industrial and commercial activity, that have been identified from land use information;
- e. The permanent waste disposal area as approved by DEM at the sites of historically permitted or approved inactive landfills and inactive land disposal sites for solid waste, hazardous waste, or sewage sludge;

- f. Active sites that are permitted for the land disposal of sewage sludge, unless such disposal site is associated with a licensed solid waste landfill; and
- g. The area immediately surrounding the specific waste sites above where DEM has determined that the groundwater is not suitable for public or private drinking water use.

As technology continues to improve and the latest data available demonstrates a better understanding and shift in the size and location of our wellhead protection areas; RIDEM is in the process of re-mapping our groundwater and has proposed a new wellhead protection map which is going thru the approval process. In order to avoid future conflicts, the North Kingstown Water Department has been working with RIDEM to coordinate local wellhead protection mapping to correspond with State mapping. North Kingstown is currently working on new modifications to the Groundwater Protection ordinances which is anticipated to reference the RIDEM GIS maps. The revised protection zones will include our community wellhead protection areas (WHPA) and a Groundwater Recharge Zone that will be consistent with the RIDEM mapping of GAA groundwater designations. The proposed RIDEM map has not received official approval at the time of the comprehensive plan approval, maps that show North Kingstown's Groundwater Overlay Zoning are included in the town's Zoning Ordinance.

The town has established groundwater overlay zoning regulations that regulate development within the sensitive areas of groundwater recharge. Conservation development is also utilized to preserve meaningful open space and property owners may participate in the state's Farm, Forest, and Open Space program which offers tax incentives to preserve agricultural and forested land. Low density rural residential designations are also deployed in environmentally sensitive areas to limit density, however, this type of development has had the unintended effect of creating large lawns that use significant water resources and often fertilizer and pesticides.





This map identifies water resources in North Kingstown by Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) Groundwater Classifications.

Figure 47. Water resources map



This map identifies important and vulnerable natural habitats in North Kingstown.

Figure 48. Natural habitats map

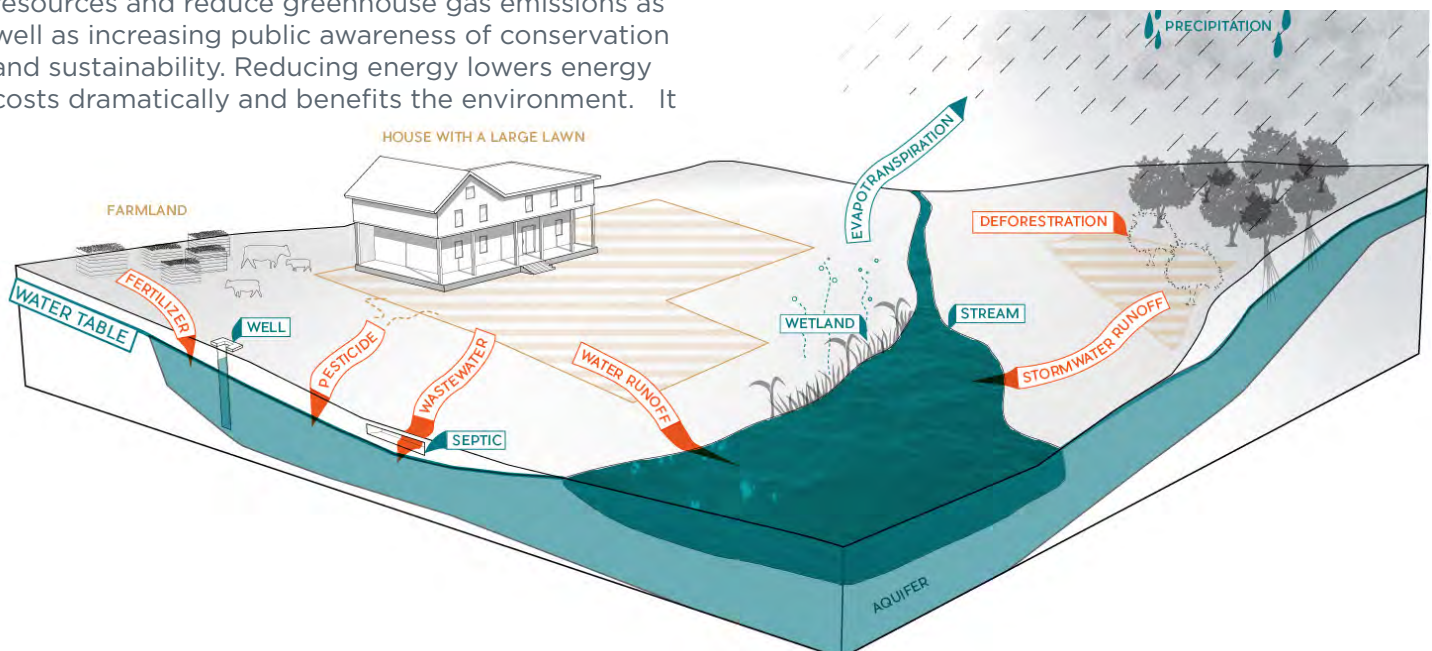
Thoughtful development and conservation is important to ensure the health of the ecosystem. Development impacts water quality and habitat in a number of ways. Deforestation contributes to erosion and interrupts the water cycle whereby water is absorbed and evaporates through trees. Runoff from roads, rooftops and other impervious surfaces picks up pollutants, such as motor oil, pesticides, fertilizer and litter, and dump them into water bodies. In major storms, the volume of runoff can cause flooding. Additionally, pollutants can infiltrate the soil and impact the groundwater and insufficient septic systems can cause wastewater to infiltrate as well.

## Energy Conservation

It is important to recognize the importance of energy consumption and its impact on the economic, social and environmental aspects of the town. Energy is consumed in every aspect of life, whether it be turning on the heat or air conditioning, driving our vehicles or watering our lawns. According to the RI State Energy Plan, Energy 2035, Rhode Islanders currently spend approximately \$3.6 billion on power and fuel each year, sourced mainly from out-of-region fossil fuels that annually emit over 11 million tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The three primary sources of energy consumption are related to electricity, thermal, and transportation needs. The Town of North Kingstown aims to use energy that is safe, secure, and sustainable and to live by example for the residents of our community. This element addresses energy conservation and green energy through the goals of promoting sustainable water and energy measures to conserve resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as increasing public awareness of conservation and sustainability. Reducing energy lowers energy costs dramatically and benefits the environment. It

is the goal of the Town of North Kingstown to use energy efficiently, conserve energy and to implement renewable resources for energy production. This will complement the Energy 2035 goals to maximize energy efficiency, promote local and regional renewable energy, develop markets for alternative thermal and transportation fuels, make strategic investments in energy infrastructure, mobilize capital and reduce costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to lead by example.

There are several policies and actions related to energy conservation and green energy found in this chapter. They include encouraging energy efficiency and alternative energy solutions, adopting environmental standards for low impact development and energy efficiency, encouraging home energy audits and cost-saving efficiency upgrades and alternative energy solutions, encouraging the installation of solar panels, exploring opportunities for efficiency and sustainability in town operations; reducing North Kingstown's overall carbon footprint, conducting baseline assessment of energy use for town buildings, vehicles and equipment, integrating green building strategies into existing municipal facilities and requiring green building standards, implementing pilot projects on town property to demonstrate energy efficiency and resource conservation, and developing interpretive signage to publicize town conservation and sustainability efforts and demonstration energy and water conservation projects.



**Figure 49. Diagram illustrating water quality impacts**

Untreated contaminants (indicated in red) that infiltrate soil and water sources impact the groundwater quality.

The town is undertaking the following energy conservation and green energy efforts:

- Upgrades to the DPW parking lot lights and several municipal buildings to LED;
- Converting Fire Station 1 from oil heat to natural gas;
- Potential development of two solar fields on Hamilton Allenton and Oak Hill Roads. These two sites should produce all of the energy for the town and school.
- Identifying locations in town to install car charging stations in different locations throughout town.
- Converting streetlights to LED.

### Recreational opportunities

North Kingstown currently has 113 acres of open space per 1000 residents which is among the highest compared with neighboring towns, though it differs by census tract [see figures 50 and 51]. By 2035, North Kingstown’s population is anticipated to grow by over 2,000 residents to 28,390. If no additional recreational space is created, the acreage per 1000 residents will be 105, which still ranks high among neighboring towns.

Public parks are distributed throughout town and most of the densely populated areas are within a mile of a park or recreational space [see figure 51]. Some areas, particularly in the western and southern parts of town, remain far from recreational opportunities, but these are also less densely populated and many of the conservation developments in these areas include open space.

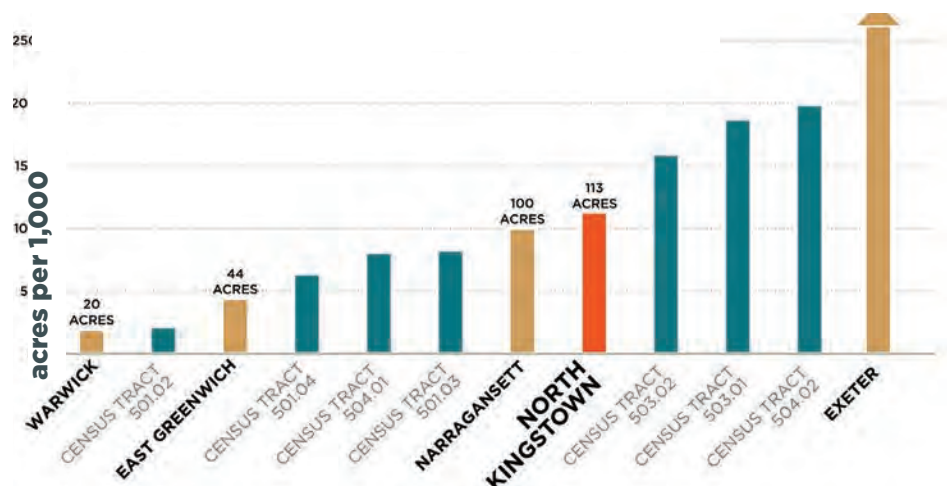
North Kingstown offers over 50 recreational areas

and sites for fishing, boating, hiking, outdoor sports and other outdoor and indoor recreation [see figure 52]. The adequacy of existing recreational opportunities is limited by facilities in need of upgrades and improvements, little room for expansion at any of the town facilities, and access. Upgrades and improvement are needed at all facilities. The Cold Spring Community Center is in need of extensive upgrade: the building itself is in need of repair and the existing heating/cooling system is very expensive to run and needs to be replaced. A new indoor recreation facility is being considered to serve as the town’s main indoor activity center and is included in the 2018 Capital Improvement Plan dependent on private funding. A new community center at Signal Rock Park is also included in the 2018 Capital Improvement Plan.

The existing practice fields are overused, inadequate to handle demand, and in need of improvements. The new fields along the Quonset bike path are anticipated to help with demand, but improving existing fields is also of key importance. The ball fields and courts at McGinn Park, Signal Rock Park, Wilson Park and Ryan Park have been targeted for improvement by the Leisure Services Committee with some work accomplished and are included in the 2018 Capital Improvement Plan.

Access to recreation varies. Some spots are accessible only by hiking in, while others require a car. Although water-related recreation is a distinct asset, public waterfront access and active recreation opportunities are limited. More could be done to expand the modes of access and publicize access points. There are opportunities to connect the town’s open space and expand the network of trails and pedestrian paths consistent with Rhode Island’s Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

**Figure 50. Comparison of publicly accessible open space <sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> RIGIS, RI Dept of Health, 2010 US Census, Town of North Kingstown.