



# PORTSMOUTH MASTER PLAN

City Council Work Session | March 27, 2017

# PORTSMOUTH 2025

## INTRODUCTION

### I. PLANNING THEMES

VIBRANT

AUTHENTIC

DIVERSE

CONNECTED

RESILIENT

### II. FOCUS AREAS

URBAN CORE

CORRIDOR

URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

### III. IMPLEMENTATION

### IV. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS



# THEMES

## VIBRANT



"A CITY THAT PROVIDES A **HIGH QUALITY** OF LIFE WITH AN **ABUNDANCE** OF **OPPORTUNITIES** FOR LIVING, WORKING AND PLAYING"

## AUTHENTIC



"A CITY THAT TREASURES ITS **UNIQUE** CHARACTER, **NATURAL** RESOURCES AND **HISTORIC** ASSETS"

## DIVERSE



"A CITY THAT **WELCOMES** RESIDENTS OF **ALL** AGES, BACKGROUNDS & ECONOMIC LEVELS & SUPPORTS A **WIDE VARIETY** OF BUSINESSES"

## CONNECTED



"A CITY THAT PROVIDES **STRONG LINKS** THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY, SUPPORTS **ALL FORMS** OF MOBILITY, & **ENCOURAGES** WALKING, BICYCLING & TRANSIT"

## RESILIENT



"A CITY THAT CONSIDERS AND **VALUES** THE **LONG TERM** HEALTH OF ITS **NATURAL & BUILT** ENVIRONMENT"

# VIBRANT

## GOAL 1.4

IMPROVE ACCESS TO INDOOR AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

**ACTION # DESCRIPTION**

- 1.4.1** Enhance neighborhood parks, recreational facilities and playgrounds, and add new ones where appropriate.
- 1.4.2** Create additional outdoor recreational fields where possible.
- 1.4.3** Develop a consolidated recreation facility for residents of all ages and income levels.
- 1.4.4** Seek innovative partnerships for the development of recreational facilities where opportunities arise.
- 1.4.5** Enhance city owned properties such as Prescott Park, Peirce Island and Sagamore Creek.
- 1.4.6** Create new public spaces that can be used for both recreation and floodplain storage.

A vibrant city is also a healthy city. The availability of convenient and affordable recreational opportunities is associated with improved health outcomes and stronger social capital. Recreational spaces double as social spaces, making positive community interaction a part of daily life along with healthy activities. Trails, parks, and public recreation spaces frequently serve populations in the greatest need of health improvements and social inclusion. Continued investment in new facilities and improved pedestrian connections between neighborhoods (see Goals 4.1 and 4.2) is essential to a healthy and vibrant Portsmouth. Specific metrics to demonstrate progress could include tracking attendance in public recreation programs by various age and income levels.

# DIVERSE

## GOAL 3.2

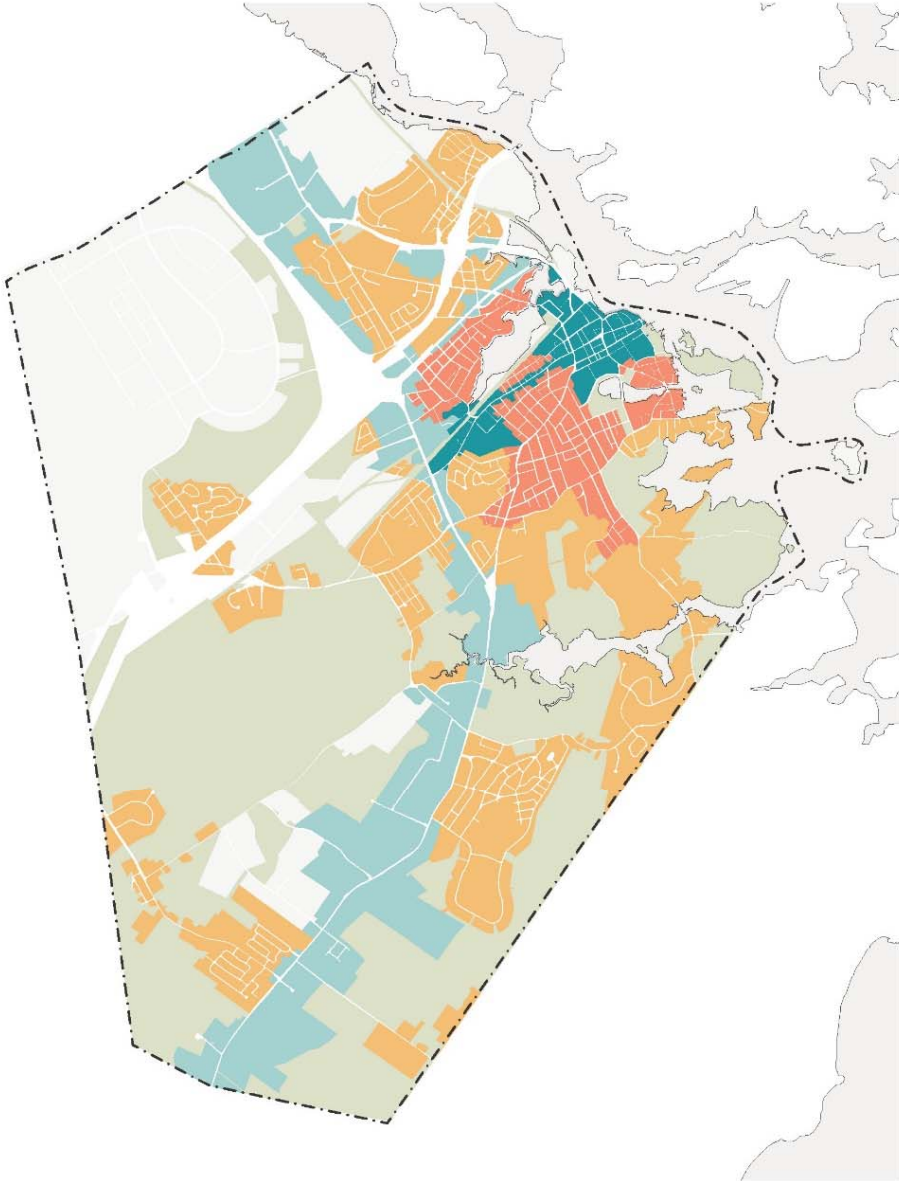
ACCOMMODATE THE HOUSING NEEDS OF LOW AND MODERATE INCOME RESIDENTS.

**ACTION # DESCRIPTION**

- 3.2.1** Streamline the approval process for affordable housing in order to reduce development costs.
- 3.2.2** Promote the development of mixed-income multifamily housing in appropriate locations with incentive zoning provisions, such as reductions in parking requirements and increased maximum heights.
- 3.2.3** Seek targeted funding to provide for the needs of special populations, including the elderly, disabled and homeless.
- 3.2.4** Provide education and incentives for low to moderate income first-time homebuyers to purchase homes in Portsmouth.
- 3.2.5** Encourage the creation of smaller housing units, such as micro-units.
- 3.2.6** Encourage businesses to establish employer-assisted housing programs.
- 3.2.7** Support mixed-use redevelopment of suitable Portsmouth Housing Authority properties.

In the absence of mandatory inclusionary mechanisms, the City can provide incentives to encourage needed housing production, such as reduced development requirements or streamlined approval processes. For example, reducing parking requirements could reduce the cost of housing, and allowing larger dwellings to be divided into smaller units can reduce the absolute rent for tenants while increasing per-square-foot return for investors.

Other forms of assistance, either from public agencies for low income residents or from employers for workforce housing, could also reduce resident costs. The Portsmouth Housing Authority is a potential partner for the City or developers, with an ability to leverage land holdings for mixed-income residential development in order to provide market rate and affordable housing together with income-restricted housing. Metrics for measuring achievement include a housing affordability rate, comparing median housing price with median income, or housing production by quintile to find the distribution of affordable to luxury housing production by year.



# FOCUS AREAS




- URBAN CORE**
- CORRIDORS**
- URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS**
- SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOODS**
- PARKS & OPEN SPACE**



# FOCUS AREAS

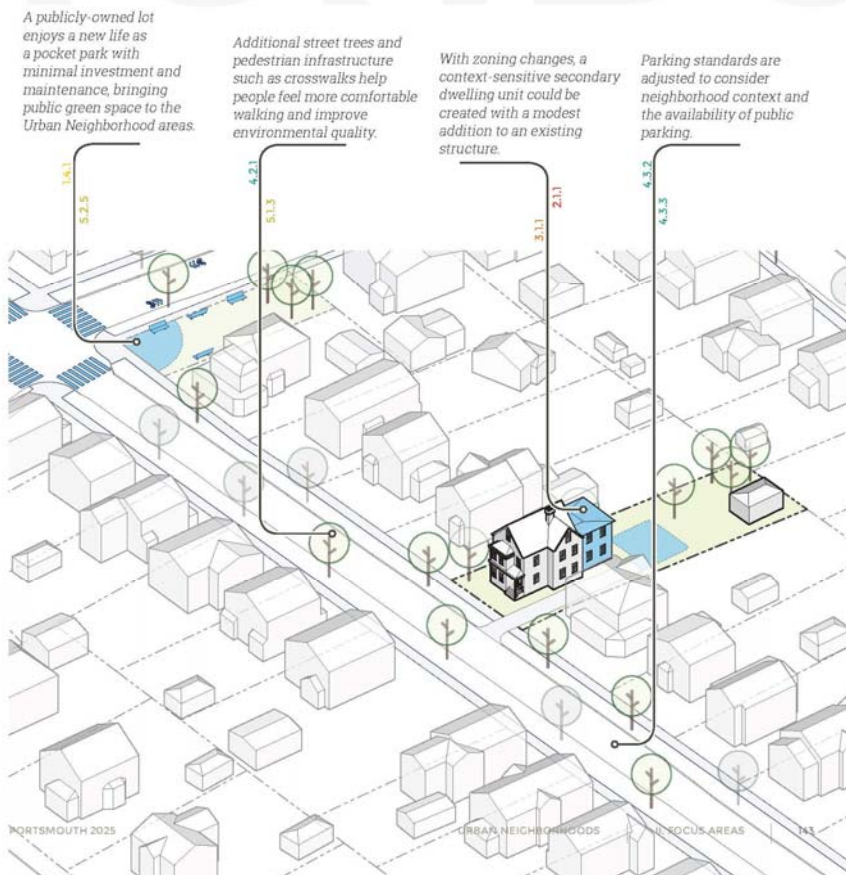


# FOCUS AREAS

	ACTION #	DESCRIPTION
<b>VIBRANT</b> 	1.1.5	Encourage public access, use and enjoyment of the downtown waterfront.
	1.4.1	Enhance neighborhood parks, recreational facilities and playgrounds, and add new ones where appropriate.
	1.4.2	Create additional outdoor recreational fields where possible.
	1.4.5	Enhance city owned properties such Prescott Park, Peirce Island and Sagamore Creek.
	1.4.6	Create new public spaces that can be used for both recreation and floodplain storage.
	<b>AUTHENTIC</b> 	2.3.2
4.1.4		Complete the implementation of the citywide wayfinding program.
<b>CONNECTED</b> 	4.2.3	Work with state and regional partners to convert the former Hampton branch to the off-road route of the New Hampshire Seacoast Greenway.
	4.2.4	Identify and implement off-road multi-use paths along North Mill Pond and other transportation and utility corridors.

# EIGHTH BO

An example of an Urban Neighborhood area with several master plan actions applied



IMPLEMENTATION



AUTHENTIC

URBAN CORE  
CORRIDOR  
URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD  
SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD  
PARKS & OPEN SPACE  
CITY-WIDE

GOAL/ACTION DESCRIPTION	FOCUS AREAS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME	RELEVANT CITY PLANS
<b>2.1</b> Ensure that new development complements and enhances its surroundings.				
2.1.1 Implement standards and guidelines to protect community character and assets, including factors such as mass, scale and resilience.	• • •	Planning Department, Planning Board	2018-2019	
2.1.2 Consider incorporating architectural design standards into the development review process.	• • • •	Planning Department, Planning Board	2018-2019	
2.1.3 Adjust residential zoning standards to ensure integrity of existing neighborhood development patterns.	• •	Planning Department	2018-2019	
2.1.4 Evaluate the Historic District boundary and adjust where appropriate.	•	Planning Department, Planning Board, Historic District Commission, City Council	Ongoing	
<b>2.2</b> Protect and enhance the integrity of historic landmarks, cherished views and open space.				
2.2.1 Identify and protect scenic road corridors and priority views of the waterfront and historic structures.	•	Planning Department, Historic District Commission	2020-2027	
2.2.2 Seek funding to protect Portsmouth's historic resources.	•	Planning Department, Historic District Commission	Ongoing	
2.2.3 Consider becoming a Certified Local Government to offer commercial historic property owners federal tax benefits.	•	Planning Department, Historic District Commission, City Council	2020-2027	
2.2.4 Consider archaeological review during site plan review process and public projects.	•	Planning Department, Planning Board	Ongoing	
<b>2.3</b> Maintain and establish usable public access to and along the waterfront.				
2.3.1 Require waterfront access when reviewing development proposals along waterfronts.	•	Planning Department, Planning Board	2018-2019	
2.3.2 Actively protect, enhance, and acquire public waterfront access.	• •	Planning Department, City Council	Ongoing	
2.3.3 Preserve water-dependent and water-related uses.	•	Planning Department, Economic Development Commission	Ongoing	



# IMPLEMENTATION CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS *VIBRANT*

## GOAL / ACTION

Support the continued vitality of the urban core through public investment and land use regulations.

- Support reinvestment in underutilized buildings and land.

Encourage walkable and mixed-use development along existing commercial corridors.

- Encourage mixed-use development in existing commercial areas by adopting new and enhancing existing zoning techniques such as the Gateway Planned Development option.



# IMPLEMENTATION

## CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS

### *AUTHENTIC*

#### GOAL / ACTION

**Ensure that new development complements and enhances its surroundings.**

- Evaluate the Historic District boundary and adjust where appropriate.

**Protect and enhance the integrity of historic landmarks, cherished views, and open space.**

- Consider becoming a Certified Local Government to offer commercial historic property owners federal tax benefits.

**Maintain and establish usable public access to and along the waterfront.**

- Actively protect, enhance, and acquire public waterfront access.





# IMPLEMENTATION CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS *DIVERSE*

## GOAL / ACTION

Ensure that the supply and character of commercial space can adapt to a changing economy.

- Identify flexible, low-cost locations for business startups and support their development through appropriate zoning.





# IMPLEMENTATION CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS DIVERSE

## GOAL / ACTION

### Adapt existing housing stock to accommodate changing demographics.

- Develop regulations for accessory dwelling units that promote affordable housing for all income levels and protect neighborhood character.
- Promote the development of mixed-income multifamily housing in appropriate locations with incentive zoning provisions, such as reductions in parking requirements and increased building heights.
- Encourage the creation of smaller housing units, such as micro-units.
- Support mixed-use redevelopment of suitable Portsmouth Housing Authority properties.

### Accommodate the housing needs of low and moderate income residents.

- Streamline the approval process for affordable housing in order to reduce development costs.

Along collector roads the addition of pedestrian infrastructure, such as crosswalks and multi-use paths, improves the experience for those trying to walk or bike to local services.

Parcels at the interface between Suburban Neighborhoods and Corridors can be designed to provide services and amenities for the neighborhood.

Street trees and low impact development standards improve the sustainability and comfort of neighborhood roads.

Larger homes may accommodate accessory dwelling units, expanding housing options while maintaining existing neighborhood character.



# IMPLEMENTATION CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS CONNECTED

## GOAL / ACTION

**Ensure that biking and walking are safe, convenient, and comfortable throughout the city.**

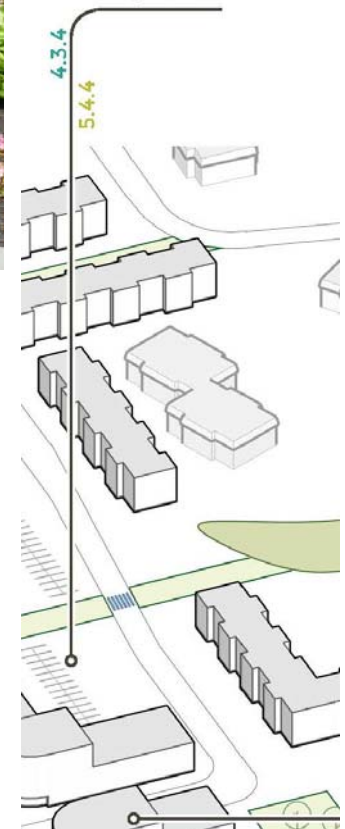
- Update city ordinances to enhance safety and convenience for bicycles and pedestrians in development projects.

**Manage public and private parking supply to serve development needs without compromising community character.**

- Adjust off-street parking requirements to account for variables in public supply, neighborhood congestion, etc.



*A required parking study for a large development leads to shared parking, decreasing overall parking and prioritizing electric vehicles and other modes of transportation.*





# IMPLEMENTATION CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS RESILIENT

## GOAL / ACTION

**Implement best management practices and site design standards to ensure sustainability and resilience of public and private infrastructure.**

- Encourage sustainable low impact building and site development through strengthened land use regulations, incentives, and education.
- Improve water conservation measures through land use regulations, grants, educations, and other incentives.

**Incorporate climate change impacts and adaptation into all development review and planning efforts.**

- Incorporate sea level rise projections based on up-to-date state of the art dynamic models into adaptation planning and land use regulations.
- Amend building codes to address the impacts of climate change.
- Incorporate climate change adaptation strategies into capital planning for long-term infrastructure protection.

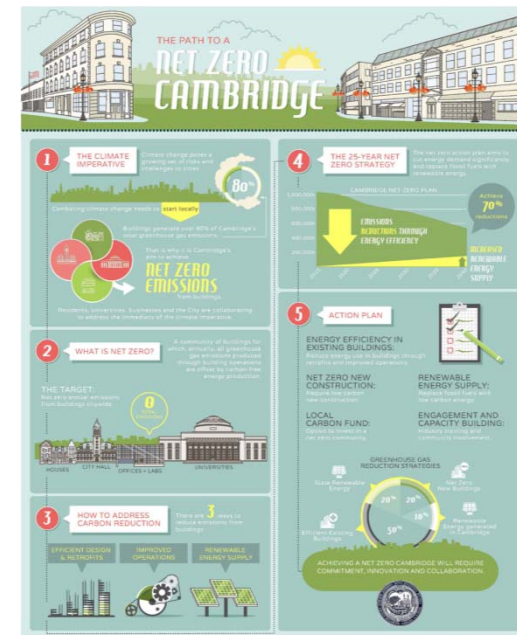


City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire

COASTAL RESILIENCE INITIATIVE

## Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan

April 2, 2013





## NEXT STEPS

- Zoning revisions for housing in corridor areas (in progress)
- Zoning revisions related to workforce / affordable housing covenants
- Climate adaptation for historic district properties (in progress)
- Zoning revisions for accessory dwelling units (complete, continue to evaluate)
- Revisions/updates to Site Review and Subdivision Regulations to incorporate transportation and sustainability goals
- Creation of a city-wide Open Space Plan