

# **BARBARA JORDAN II COMMUNITY MEETING 3 & YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DISCUSSION:**

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

January 2019

Prepared by Camiros, Ltd. Summaries included in this memo were derived from feedback received at Community Meeting 3 on January 14, 2019 and the Youth Engagement Discussion on January 16, 2019

camiros RIHousing





# 1. Introductory presentation

31 neighborhood residents and stakeholders attended Community Meeting 2 at the Southside Cultural Center on Monday, January 14 from 6:00-8:00PM to discuss the future of the Barbara Jordan-II redevelopment plan. The meeting began with an introduction to the Barbara Jordan II project and a summarization of community meetings 1&2 followed by an update on the Early Action Project.



## Early Action Project

- An early action project is intended to produce something beneficial, visible, and tangible for the community that keep residents engaged and provides an opportunity for community collaboration before the redevelopment of Barbara Jordan II commences.
- Beautifying the Salvation Army wall along Hayward Street across from the Southside Community Land Trust community garden and their future headquarters was identified as a possible Early Action Project.
- Although the specifics of the project scope still need to be finalized, Trinity Square Together and the Southside Community Land Trust are currently working on beautifying areas of Upper South Providence this Spring 2019 and have identified the Salvation Army wall as a possible activity site.



*Looking North on Hayward Street*

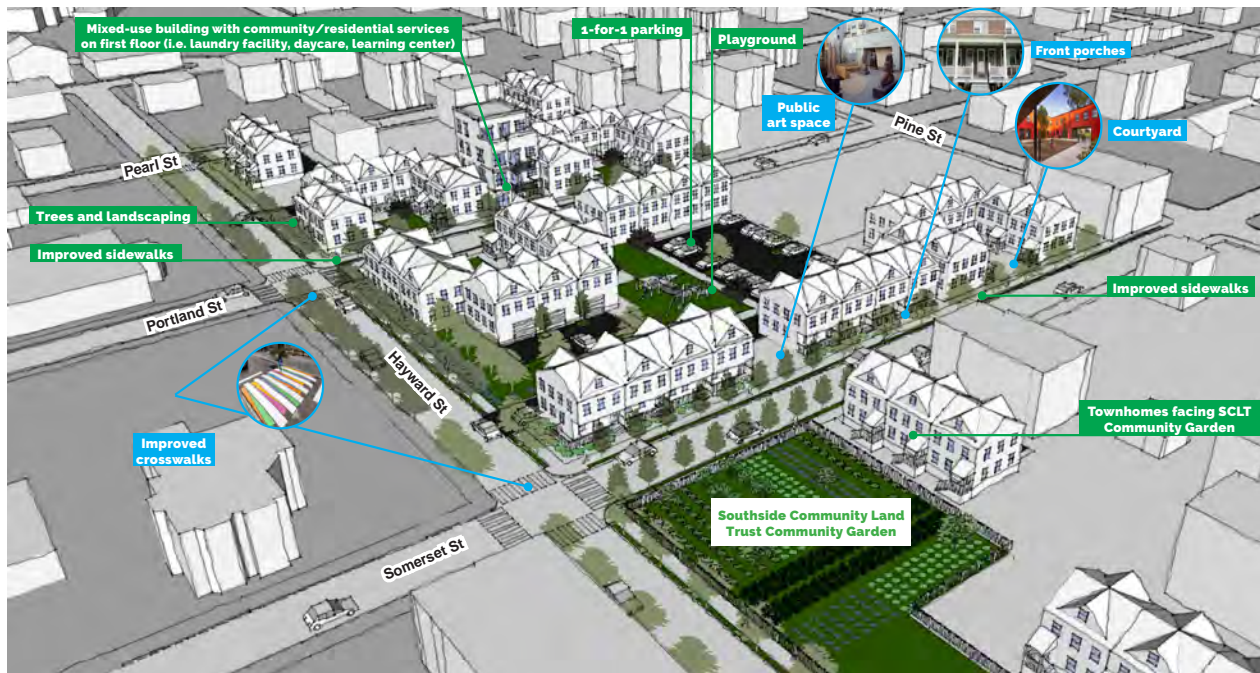


*Looking South on Hayward Street*

# 2. Design concepts

At Community Meeting 3, Camiros presented three illustrative design concepts as a tool to depict what Barbara Jordan II could possibly look like based upon the community feedback received at Community Meeting 2. The design concepts were created by Camiros and do NOT represent in any form what the final development will necessarily look like. The three design concepts are organized around density ranges of 80 units, 110 units, and 140 units (Barbara Jordan II originally included 74 units).

## Design Concept A



Preservation/rehabilitation of Southern Cluster of properties



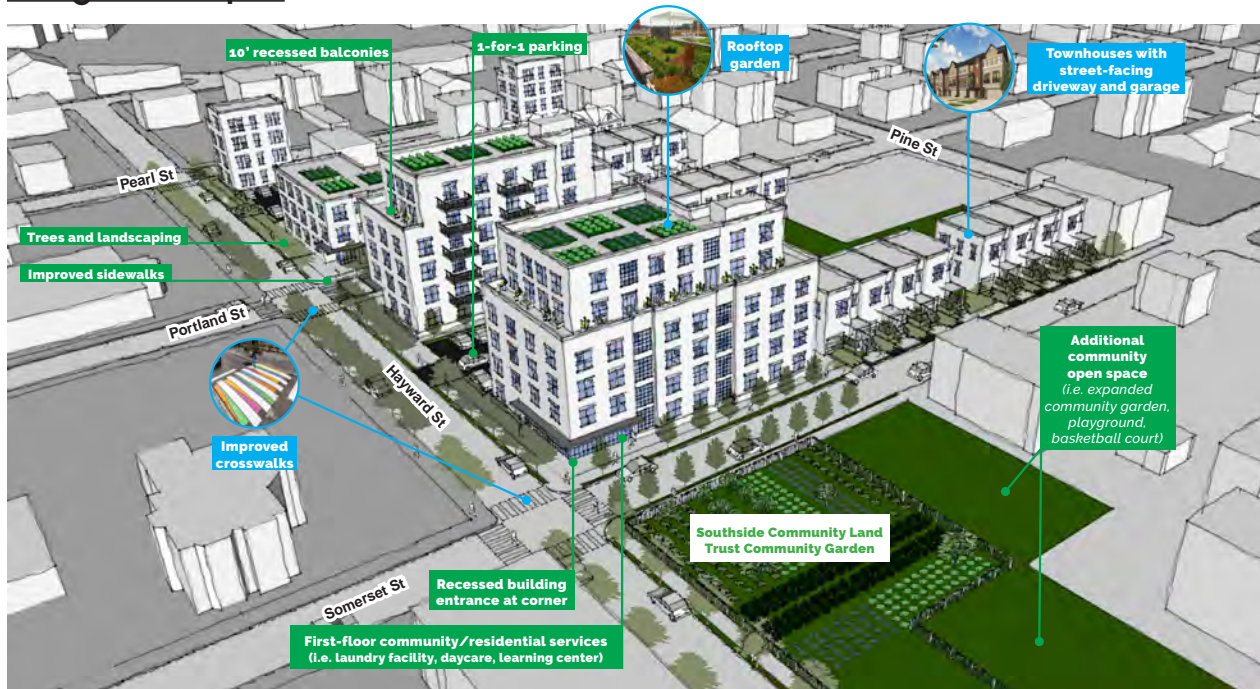
Site plan of Northern Cluster of properties

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster (57 Units)	3 Unit	1	3
	1 Unit	54	54
	Community/Resident Services (i.e. laundry facility, daycare, learning center, management office)		
Southern Cluster (23 Units)	3 Unit	7	21
	2 Unit	1	2
Total Number of Residential Units			80

*\*Income ranges for new units will be determined by selected developer*

Design Concept A is primarily a townhouse development in the northern cluster of properties and a preservation/rehabilitation-focused development in the southern cluster. In total, this scheme would add an additional 6 units to the previous 74 units that was formerly Barbara Jordan-II. By eliminating the large side setbacks that currently exist between properties, more buildings and additional common open spaces can be created. Many of the townhouses are oriented in a courtyard layout scheme to create smaller pockets of open space intended to encourage communal interaction amongst neighbors. One four-story mixed-use building is included to provide three residential units above a community/residential first-floor space. Participants at Community Meeting 2 identified the need for more laundry facilities, daycare centers, or learning centers as possible uses for community spaces. These community spaces would ideally be for Barbara Jordan-II residents due to the existing concentration of public services and non-profits operating in the immediate community.

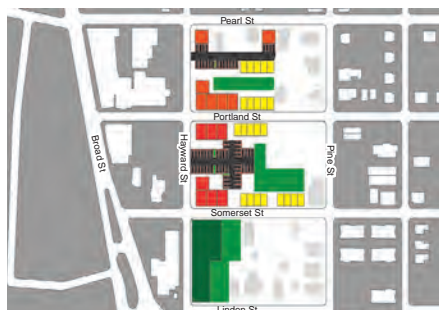
# Design Concept B



New construction of Southern Cluster of properties



Looking south on Hayward St and Portland St



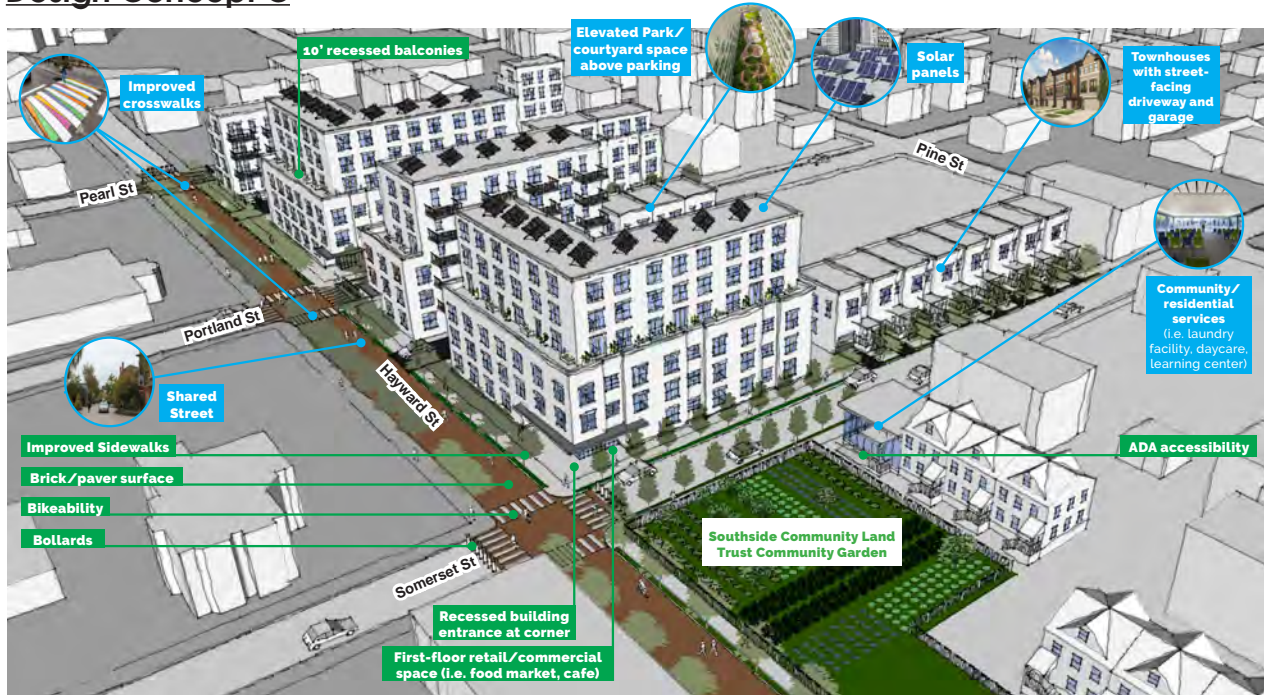
Site plan of Northern Cluster of properties

Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster (86 Units)	6 Unit	7	42
	3 Unit	7	21
	1 Unit	23	23
Community/Resident Services (i.e. laundry facility, daycare, learning center, management office)			
Southern Cluster (24 Units)	3 Unit	8	24
Total Number of Residential Units			110

\*Income ranges for new units will be determined by selected developer

Design Concept B increases the existing density from 74 units to 110 total units requiring multi-story residential buildings to be built on the northern and southern sites. This design concept features a mix of building types from two-story townhouses, to three-to-four story and six-story multi-residential buildings. Upper story setbacks are encouraged to help larger buildings fit into the scale of the neighborhood. The larger buildings are intentionally situated closer to Hayward Street and the townhouses closer to Pine Street to best match the existing neighborhood character. Portions of the ground floor space for the larger buildings are intended for retail or community/resident use. The two RI Housing parcels adjacent to the Southside Community Land Trust community garden do not feature any buildings and could present an opportunity to create additional park/open space for the community.

# Design Concept C



New construction and additional density of Southern Cluster of properties

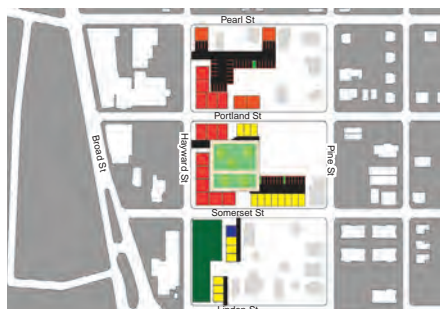
Cluster	Building Type	Number of Buildings	Number of Units
Northern Cluster (113 Units)	6 Unit	14	84
	3 Unit	4	12
	1 Unit	17	17
	Retail/commercial space (i.e. food market, cafe)		
Southern Cluster (27 Units)	12 Unit	1	12
	3 Unit	5	15
Total Number of Residential Units			140

\*Income ranges for new units will be determined by selected developer



Shared Street on Hayward St

Design Concept C nearly doubles the existing 74 Barbara Jordan-II units. Large six-story multi-residential buildings are necessary in both the northern and southern clusters to achieve this amount of units. Still, Design Concept C includes some single-family townhouse units to provide families with more options. Commercial units could also be incorporated within the redevelopment of BJ-II. Residents at previous community meetings have identified a food market or café as a well-suited commercial amenity for the immediate neighborhood. Due to the lack of open space, an elevated park or courtyard space could be integrated into the development above the parking podium between Portland St and Somerset St. Another distinguishing feature is a “shared street” concept along Hayward Street to create an enhanced pedestrian environment that creates a direct connection to the new Southside Community Land Trust Headquarters at the Southeast corner of Linden Street and Hayward Street while keeping through-vehicular traffic on Broad Street.



Site plan of Northern Cluster of properties

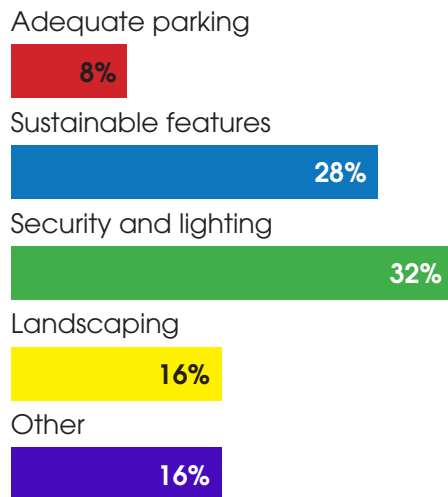


### 3. Results of keypad polling activity

At Community Meeting 3, Camiros conducted a keypad polling activity that allowed participants to answer a series of questions using an electronic device. After a thirty second timer, results would appear in real-time displaying how each choice was favored. The questions focused on preferred design features participants would like to see at Barbara Jordan II. Below are the results:

#1

#### Which of the following site features are most important to you?

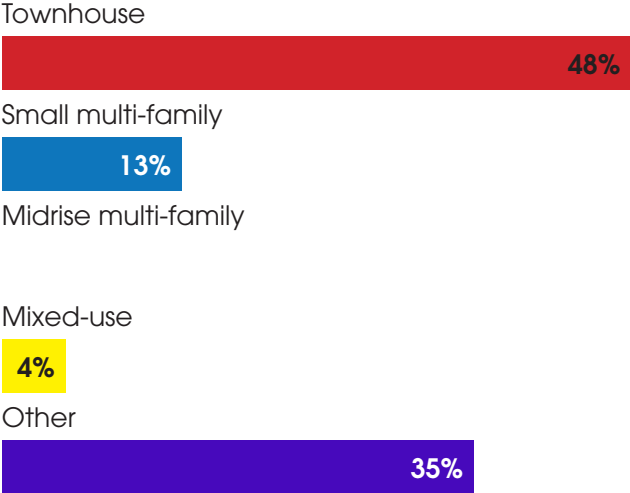


#### Comments:

- Safety in the general Upper South Providence neighborhood is still a primary concern for many meeting participants
- Lack of sidewalks makes the neighborhood less safe for pedestrians and drivers

# #2

## Which of the following housing typologies do you prefer?

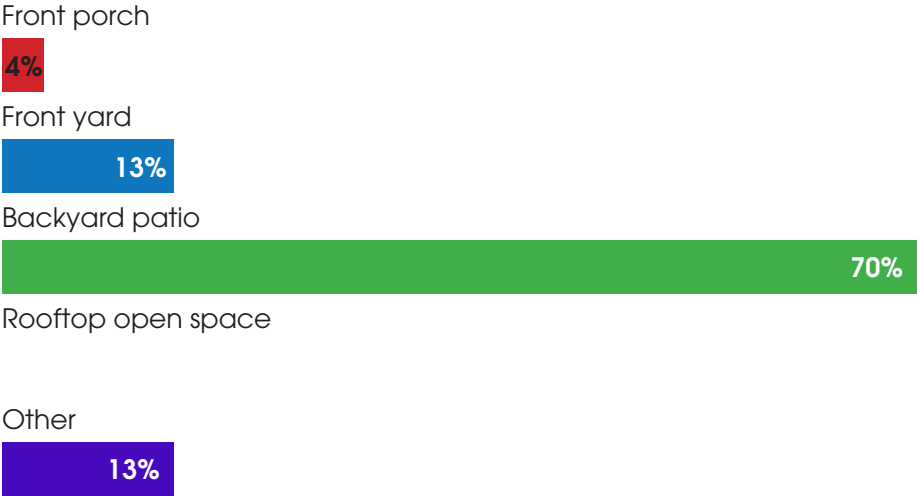


### **Comments:**

- Townhouses fit in better with the surrounding neighborhood. Larger multi-family buildings would not.
- Other option would be to keep them the way they are or fix them up.
- Would like to see more (low-income/affordable) units but want to create a sense of community as well
- Townhouses would cost less to construct. Keeping costs low may allow for more low-income/affordable units

# #3

## Which of the following private outdoor space do you prefer?



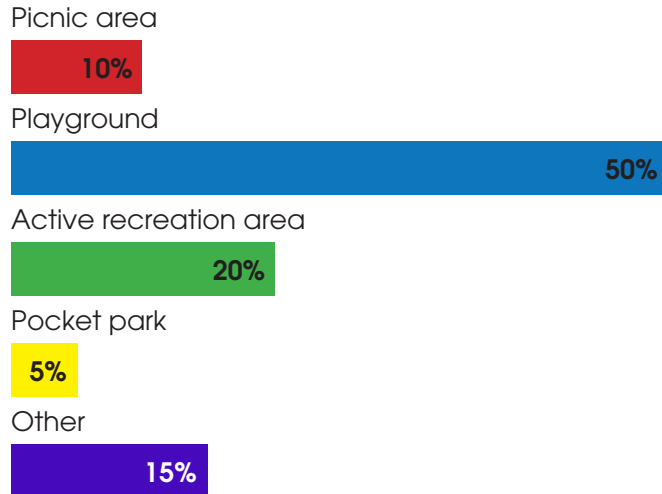
### **Comments:**

- Lots of households have kids and a backyard/patio space would provide a private, safe space to play
- No front doors adjacent to the sidewalk. Front door needs a buffer space away from the sidewalk
- High fences for individual properties



# #4

## Which of the following public open space areas do you prefer?



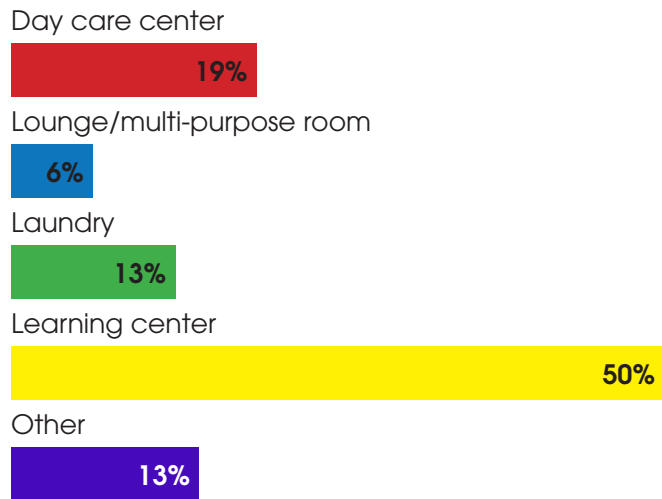
### Comments:

- Kids are not going outside enough

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# #5

## Which of the following community amenities do you prefer?



### Comments:

- A community center would be nice but it needs to be maintained and managed over time
- Smaller homes/townhouses could include in-unit laundry
- Youth/young people could help adults and others teach computer skills
- Art classes, yoga, dance classes, exercise classes. Would like to see a lot of activity for all ages

# #6

## Which of the following small commercial/retail options do you prefer?

Small food market



Cafe

Barber/salon

Restaurant



Other



### Comments:

- There is no super market in Upper South Providence
- Many participants think a community/resident space is still much more suitable than any retail space

# #7

## Which of the following neighborhood improvements do you prefer?

Improved sidewalks and crossings



Shared streets



Public arts/murals



Expanded community garden



Other



### Comments:

- It is a disaster that there were no sidewalks near many Barbara Jordan properties
- Artwork can up lift the community and bring a peace of mind to residents
- Salvation Army wall makes a lot of sense
- Art should illustrate the culture, richness, diversity of Upper South Providence; bring pride to the people and inspire

# 3. General remarks

At Community Meeting 3, attendees expressed their concerns over a number of issues related to the redevelopment of the Barbara Jordan-II properties. Below is a summarization of what was discussed.



## Cost of construction and the affordable housing crisis

- Without knowing exact figures and estimates, each design concept appears to increase in cost when more units are added. How does RIHousing and the selected developer expect to provide lower income rents when the cost of construction is expected to be so high? Ultimately, Camiros and RIHousing assured the project will ultimately come down to economics and will be highly dependent on subsidies to provide a broad range of income into the development.
- Meeting participants expressed serious concerns about displacement and the long-term future of low-income households in Upper South Providence.
- Wages and current job opportunities are not enough to cover adequate housing for working class families in South Providence. Some families are doubling up with one another but are still vulnerable to being homeless.
- One meeting participant emphasized the affordable housing crisis is not just happening in Upper South Providence but throughout Rhode Island and the rest of the country.
- The current waitlist for Section 8 vouchers and housing assistance is way too long.
- This message of lack of affordability needs to directly be sent up civic leaders and the powers that be.

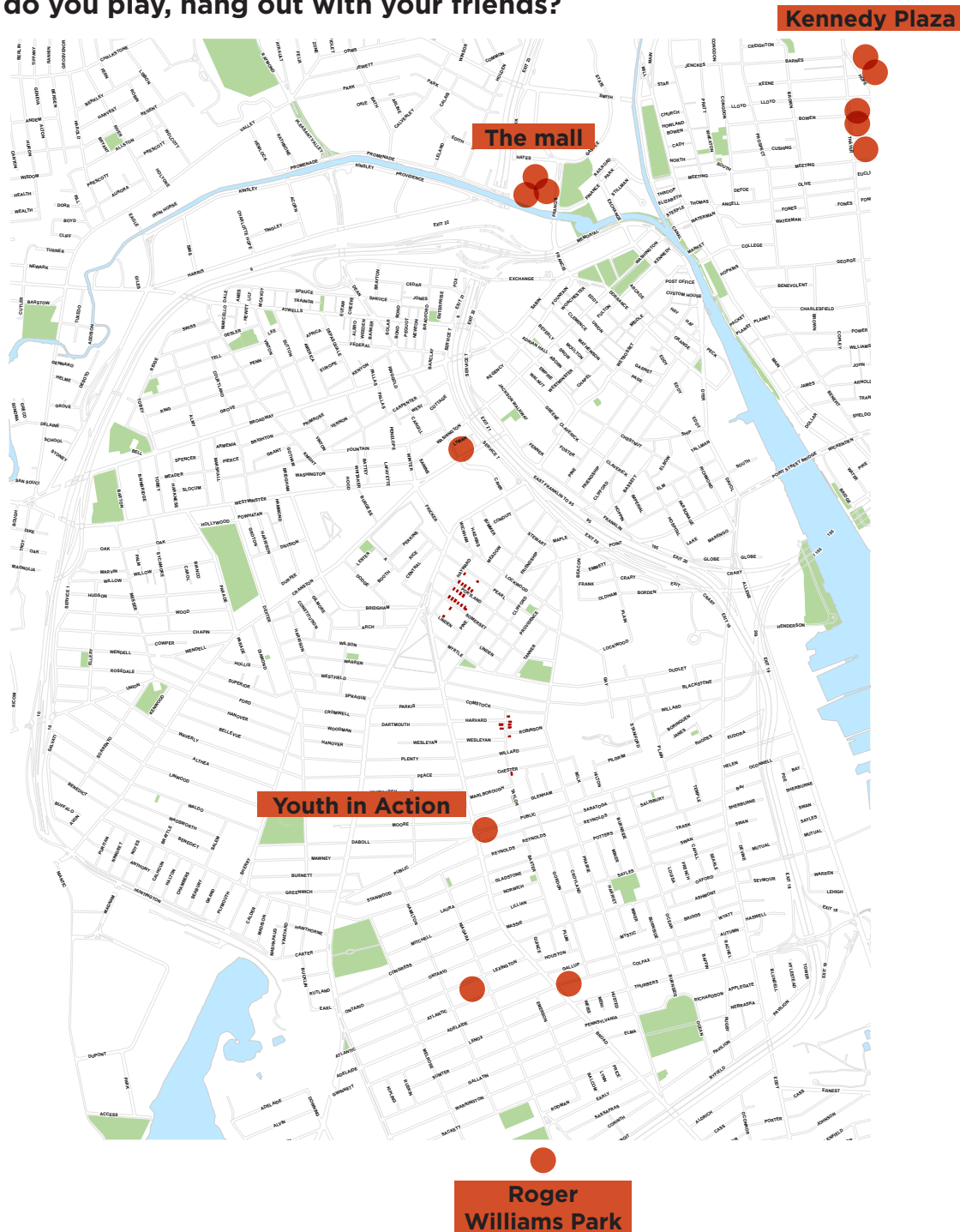
## Comfortability

- Some meeting participants wanted to stress the importance of not having too many units stacked on top of another.
- Many participants iterated that tall, dense buildings for affordable housing would too closely resemble and be unfairly associated with “housing projects.”
- The community would like to see more units than before but meeting participants said they still want to maintain a sense of community as well.

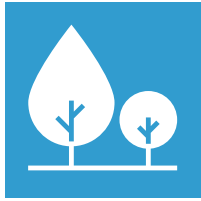
# 4. Youth engagement discussion

20 youth residents between the ages of 11-18 attended the Upper South Providence Youth Discussion at Youth in Action on Wednesday, January 16 from 6:00-8:00PM to discuss urban planning, the future of Upper South Providence, and to kickoff Youth in Action's mapping project. The first activity had meeting participants conduct a dot-mapping exercise where they identified places where they play and hang out with friends. The second activity had the meeting participants identify the most important assets and challenges of Upper South Providence.

## Where do you play, hang out with your friends?



## Where are the best assets of Upper South Providence?



Parks and greenery



Restaurants



Fast food, breakfast places



Music throughout the neighborhood



Kids playing outside



Nice coffeeshops



Workers



Food shopping



Trash clean up



The hospital



Community gardens



Unity / togetherness

## Where are the challenges of Upper South Providence?



Graffiti



Vandalism



Homelessness



Broken homes



Car accidents



Stranger danger



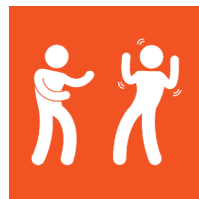
Rats



A lot of college kids



Dogs barking at night



Violence in the neighborhood



Air pollution



Loud music

## **General Remarks**

- A single map provides opportunities to tell not just one story but many.
- Most importantly, context is everything.
- The boundary of the map dictates what the “story” is about and dramatically effects how the viewer interprets the significance of the map.
- Each map has a different intended audience.
- Things that are not included within the boundary such as streets, labels, your house, etc. does not indicate that those items are unimportant. Simply that those items, if included, would change the narrative of the map as intended.
- Context also extends to the text and language included on a map. The dot exercise can lead to very different results depending on the question that is asked.
- The icons were interpreted differently amongst different meeting participants.
- Sometimes meeting participants were unable to find an icon that represented something they wanted to identify as an asset or challenge so they had to get creative.
- Some icons were only listed as an asset and some were only listed as a challenge.
- Youth have some options to play/hang out together but only where they feel comfortable. There could be more options throughout the neighborhood and city.
- Roger Williams park is a popular destination for many which was not included on the map. There are many food trucks and restaurant options youth enjoy.