

**PAWTUCKET REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
AMENDMENT NO. 17  
DOWNTOWN GATEWAY PROJECT**

**PAWTUCKET REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**



**Resolution by Pawtucket Redevelopment Agency on November 4, 2020  
Ordinance by the Pawtucket City Council on December 9, 2020**

# Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>Project Area Description</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Initiatives and Actions of this Amendment</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Downtown Pawtucket Gateway Project Information</b>	<b>23</b>

## **Figures**

Figure 1 Redevelopment Area, City of Pawtucket

Figure 2 Current Land Use, City of Pawtucket

Figure 3 Current Zoning, City of Pawtucket

Figure 4 Downtown Pawtucket Gateway Project Area

Figure 5 Conceptual Plan for Downtown Pawtucket Gateway Project Area

## **Appendices**

A – PRA Resolution

B – City Council Ordinance

## I. INTRODUCTION

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In 1982, the City of Pawtucket (the "City") adopted its redevelopment plan (the "Plan" and/or the "Redevelopment Plan"), designated a Redevelopment Area and established objectives and procedures for the City's redevelopment. Since the Plan was adopted, sixteen (16) separate amendments have been adopted by the Pawtucket Redevelopment Agency ("the PRA"), approved by the Planning Board, and enacted as ordinances by the City Council.

The Plan's objective was, and continues to be, to provide the PRA with the tools and authority necessary to: eliminate conditions of blight by providing needed public improvements, facilitate rehabilitation through the repair of deteriorated structures, facilitate land assembly and redevelopment, and provide financing for certain public improvements. Redevelopment is critical to revitalize the City, to increase employment opportunities, and to increase tax revenue. Redevelopment also supports varied job markets by providing opportunities for growth of existing businesses and by attracting new businesses, and allows for the expansion of facilities and activities through the acquisition of privately-owned, under-utilized parcels, as identified in the Plan.

This is the PRA's Amendment No. 17 to the Plan (the "Amendment"). The purpose of this Amendment is to enable the PRA to facilitate the acquisition of the so-called "Apex Properties," described below, and to provide for the acquisition financing, and other financing for projects including infrastructure improvements reasonably necessary for the development of recreational projects, with planned redevelopment of the surrounding area, which will create and/or preserve jobs within the State. This project is contemplated to be a catalyst for revitalization and job creation in the City's downtown and the entire Redevelopment Area.

This project is named the "Downtown Gateway Project." The PRA and the City intend for the Downtown Gateway Project to serve the primary purpose of enhancing Downtown Pawtucket for the citizens of the City and the State, and to have the coincident effect of allowing for economic development of surrounding properties, and the revitalization of the riverfront area. The Downtown Gateway Project is the linchpin, connecting the City's most significant economic development projects. It is located along the Pawtucket River shoreline and provides an opportunity to implement the City's long-range plans for the creation of a continuous riverfront greenway connecting the Downtown with the Tidewater Project, a \$400 million riverfront redevelopment project that will begin construction in 2021. The Gateway will connect to the Pawtucket/Central Falls Intermodal Center, which is currently under construction. This project includes opening up views and access to the now-blocked riverfront on the Apex Properties. The City foresees that this site has the unique potential to be recreated as a dynamic destination which will have a catalytic effect upon businesses in the downtown and will enhance the success of both the Tidewater redevelopment and the transit-oriented developing happening around the new train station.

The Downtown Gateway Project sits at the entrance to the Downtown, across Main Street from the newly-designated National Park at the historic Slater Mill. Transportation opportunities abound for the Downtown Gateway Project with its direct access to Interstate I-95, located less

than one-half mile from the MBTA Commuter Rail and Transit Hub (under construction), connections to the Blackstone River Bikeway and potential for water access. The Downtown Gateway Project offers the potential for a variety of mixed-use developments, including hotels, apartments, restaurants and cafes, galleries, shops and offices.

The City Council has recently passed two (2) ordinances to advance the Downtown Gateway Project:

- Ordinance No. 3174 approving Amendment No. 15 to the Pawtucket Redevelopment Plan
- Ordinance No. 3221 approving Amendment No. 16 to the Pawtucket Redevelopment Plan

As indicated, the primary focus of Amendment No. 17 is to request the PRA to acquire the Apex Properties in order, among other things, (i) to open up the riverfront so that it may be used for recreational purposes, and (ii) to redevelop other portions of the Apex Properties and the surrounding project area.

The "Apex Properties" are comprised of 100 Main Street - the Apex building (Plat 23, Lot 553), 101 Main Street – Berry Building (Plat 23, Lot 670), 1 School Street, also known as 33 Main Street – Apex Tire Center (Plat 23, Lot 562), 10 School Street – Apex overflow parking lot (Plat 23, Lot 542 and 46 Main Street – former St. George's Church site (Plat 23, Lot 541) (collectively, the "Apex Properties").

This request for the PRA under Amendment No. 17 to acquire the Apex Properties is in the public interest and applies regardless of whether the acquisition is consummated through (i) a consensual purchase of the Apex Properties, if an agreement can be reached between representatives of the City and the Apex Companies or, (ii) if no such agreement can be reached, an eminent domain acquisition by the PRA of the Apex Properties pursuant to the terms of R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-32-24.1 *et seq.*

City representatives have had regular, cordial and good faith negotiations with representatives of the Apex Companies for a period of over two (2) years in order to attempt to agree upon a consensual purchase price for the Apex Properties. This has included an unsuccessful formal mediation in 2018 and direct negotiations with representatives of the Apex Companies during 2019 and 2020, which, to date, have also been unsuccessful.

The City remains ready, willing and hopeful to continue to work with Apex representatives to bring a development consistent with Amendment Nos. 15 and 17. The City would prefer to acquire the Apex Properties through a consensual sale. Accordingly, the City's hopes that the Apex Companies will continue negotiations with the City in order to attempt to finally reach common ground allowing for a consensual sale.

If and after the City Council approves an ordinance approving Amendment No. 17, then, at such time as the PRA decides it is appropriate, the PRA will take a vote, as prescribed under R.I. Gen.

Laws § 45-32-24.2(g), as to whether it is necessary to acquire the Apex Properties by eminent domain.

At such time as the PRA votes that it is necessary to acquire the Apex Properties by eminent domain, the PRA is hereby requested to take all necessary actions in order to acquire the Apex Properties by eminent domain pursuant to the terms of R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-32-24.2(g) *et seq.*

A redevelopment plan must be adopted by ordinance by the legislative body of the municipality. Accordingly, any approval of Amendment No. 17 by the PRA is not final and is subject to the approval of the Amendment by the Pawtucket City Council.

Together, Amendment No. 15 and Amendment No. 17 are intended to be consistent with the statutes newly-enacted by the State of Rhode Island (collectively, the "Eminent Domain Statutes"), including without limitation, R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-33-24.2. In the event that any provision(s) of the Eminent Domain Statutes set forth in this Amendment are determined to be unconstitutional or illegal, then said provision(s) should be severed from these Amendments, but the remainder of these Amendments should remain intact.

## II. Definitions:

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Growth District: The area within the City identified in *The Comprehensive Plan* as an area intended for growth, where development and redevelopment would be beneficial. Growth districts are located in close proximity to commercial arterials, older industrial areas or large vacant areas. It is also identified in Amendment No. 16 to the Redevelopment Plan. (The Apex Properties are within the Growth District.)

Project Area: All or any portion of the Redevelopment Area. A project area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental or inimical to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare, or otherwise falls within the definition of a "blighted or substandard area," but whose inclusion is necessary, with or without change in their conditions or ownership, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part. R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-31-8 (11); see also R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-32-6. "Project Area" shall also have the meaning as set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-33.2-3(3). (The Apex Properties are within the Project Area.)

Redevelopment Area: The area designated by the City Council in the Plan in 1982, and/or as subsequently amended, being an area of the community found by the City Council for the City to be blighted and substandard, where redevelopment is necessary in order to effectuate the public purposes declared in the R.I. Gen. Laws title 45, chapter 31-33, inclusive, as amended (the "Redevelopment Act of 1956"). (The Apex Properties are within the Redevelopment Area.)

Tax Increment Area: A tax increment area designated in a project plan adopted pursuant to § 45-33.2-4. The "Tax Increment Area" may consist of one or more parcels or lots of land, whether or not contiguous, or one or more buildings or structures, whether or not adjacent, or one or more parcels of land; provided, that upon adoption of the project plan the aggregate taxable valuation of the property within all tax increment areas within the city or town does not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the taxable valuation of all property subject to taxation within the city or town. (R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-33.2-3 (7)) (The Apex Properties are within the Tax Increment Area.)

Redevelopment Plan: A plan for a redevelopment project, which:

- (i) Conforms to the general plan of the community as a whole; and
- (ii) Is sufficiently complete to indicate land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the project area, zoning and planning changes, if any, land uses, maximum densities, building requirements, and the plan's relationship to definite local objectives, respecting appropriate land uses, improved traffic, public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities, and other public improvements. (R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-31-8(16))

Blighted and Substandard Area: Any area that is a "slum blighted area," a "deteriorated blighted area," or an "arrested blighted area," or any combination of these areas. "Blighted and substandard area" shall also include those areas where hazardous materials, as defined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 23-19.14-2, are present, regardless of whether or not the entire area contains such hazardous materials.

### III. PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION

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#### A. Location and Boundaries

The City of Pawtucket Redevelopment Area consists of approximately 2.5 square miles. The Redevelopment Area (see Figure 1, below) includes all or portions of twelve contiguous census tracts which exhibit indices of distress. The Apex Properties are located within the Redevelopment Area.

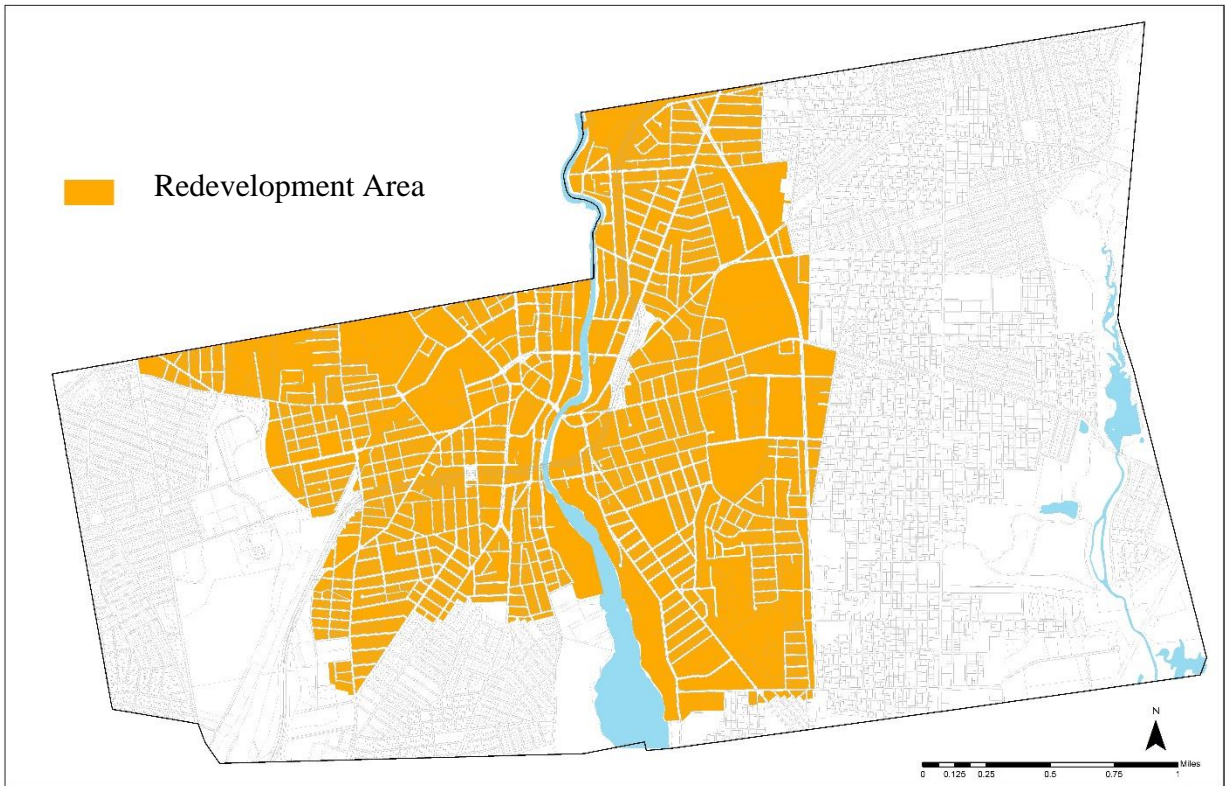


Figure 1. Redevelopment Area

#### B. Existing Conditions

##### i. Demographics Overview

The City's Redevelopment Area contains approximately 43,000 residents (see 2010 US Census). The entire City includes just under 72,000 residents.

The Redevelopment Area demonstrates significant indices of distress with unemployment rates and poverty rates above national, State and City-wide averages. The percentage of minority and limited English-speaking households located within the Redevelopment Area is also greater than the State and City averages. Poverty levels are high in the Redevelopment Area with 25 of



28 Block Groups indicating a low to moderate income population in excess of 50% of its total population (see American Community Survey (“ACS”) 2006-2010). Furthermore, eleven out of twelve census tracts in the Redevelopment Area also have a higher percentage of families living below the poverty level than the City average (see ACS 2011-2015). The same ACS survey data indicated that nine of the twelve census tracts had populations with limited English-speaking households, which is above the City average. According to the ACS survey data, the Redevelopment Area was also losing population at a significant rate with all but two of the twelve census tracts losing population between 2000 and 2010, and the average population loss of 3.24% was a full percentage point higher than the City average population rate of decrease, and nearly four percentage points below the State’s population growth rate. These demographic characteristics of the Redevelopment Area are illustrated in the tables below:


**Unemployment Rate (in percentages), Not Seasonally Adjusted, for the City of Pawtucket, the State of Rhode Island and the U.S.**

	U.S.	RI	Pawtucket
October 2018	3.5	3.4	4.2
October 2019	3.3	3.3	3.6

Source: RI Department of Labor, October 2019

**Rates of Minority Residents, Residents in Poverty and Limited English Speaking Households in the City of Pawtucket Compared to the Census Tracts within the Redevelopment Area**

Census Tract	Percent Minority	% Families Below Poverty Level	% Limited English Speaking Households
<b>State of RI</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Pawtucket</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13.1</b>
150	33.6	10.3	7.5
151	62.1	27.9	17.7
152	54.6	36.5	39.2
153	36.9	23.8	14.4
154	58.3	22.6	22.5
155	29.4	19.6	5
160	48	17.8	19.6
161	62.1	30.5	16.4
164	59	24.1	31.1
166	47.1	11.9	14
167	49.7	22.4	8.9
171	35.8	21	6.4

 = Greater than Pawtucket Average

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5 -Year Estimate

**Rate of Population Change for the State of RI, City of Pawtucket and the Census Tracts within the Redevelopment Area. 2000-2010**

Census Tract	Census 2000	Census 2010	Change	% Change
<b>State of RI</b>	<b>1,048,319</b>	<b>1,052,567</b>	<b>4248</b>	<b>0.40</b>
<b>Pawtucket</b>	<b>72,958</b>	<b>71,148</b>	<b>-1810</b>	<b>(2.54)</b>
150	4,461	4,470	9	<b>0.20</b>
151	4,955	4,472	-483	<b>(10.80)</b>
152	2,671	2,421	-250	<b>(10.33)</b>
153	2,372	2,355	-17	<b>(0.72)</b>
154	2,318	2,258	-60	<b>(2.66)</b>
155	4,282	3,999	-283	<b>(7.08)</b>
160	3,370	3,289	-81	<b>(2.46)</b>
161	4,493	4,607	114	<b>2.47</b>
164	5,229	4,938	-291	<b>(5.89)</b>
166	1,894	1,799	-95	<b>(5.28)</b>
167	3,173	3,109	-64	<b>(2.06)</b>
171	4,939	4,882	-57	<b>(1.17)</b>

Source: 2010 Census

ii. Land Uses

Existing land use regulations in the City of Pawtucket are established in the City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan, Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations and the Zoning Ordinances. Figure 2, below, illustrates the current land uses of the entire City.

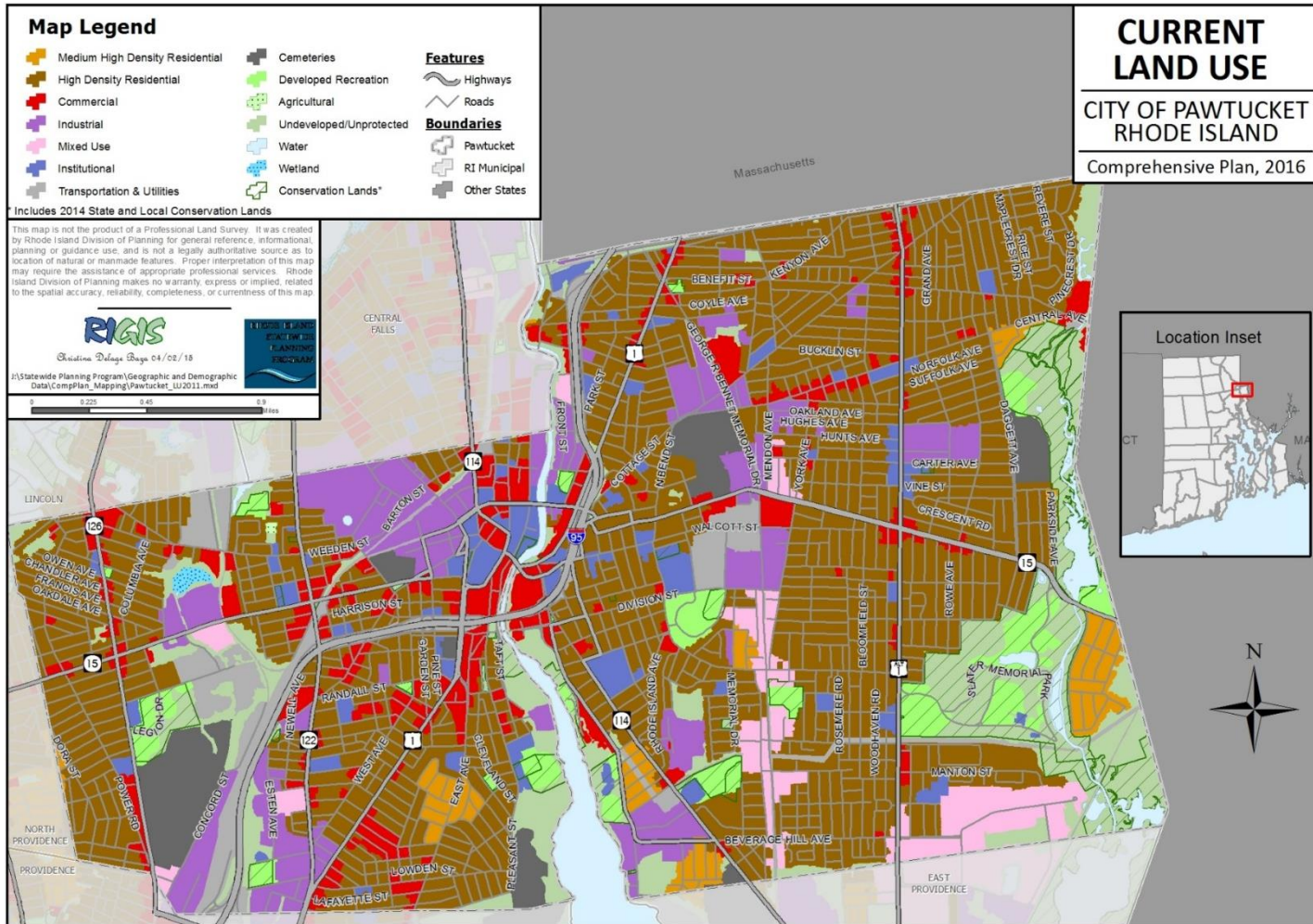


Figure 2 Existing Land Use 2017 Pawtucket Comprehensive Plan

### iii. Zoning

The Apex Properties are zoned Riverfront Commons and there are no zoning changes currently contemplated. Figure 3 illustrates the zoning for the entire City, including the Project Area, which is zoned Riverfront Commons.

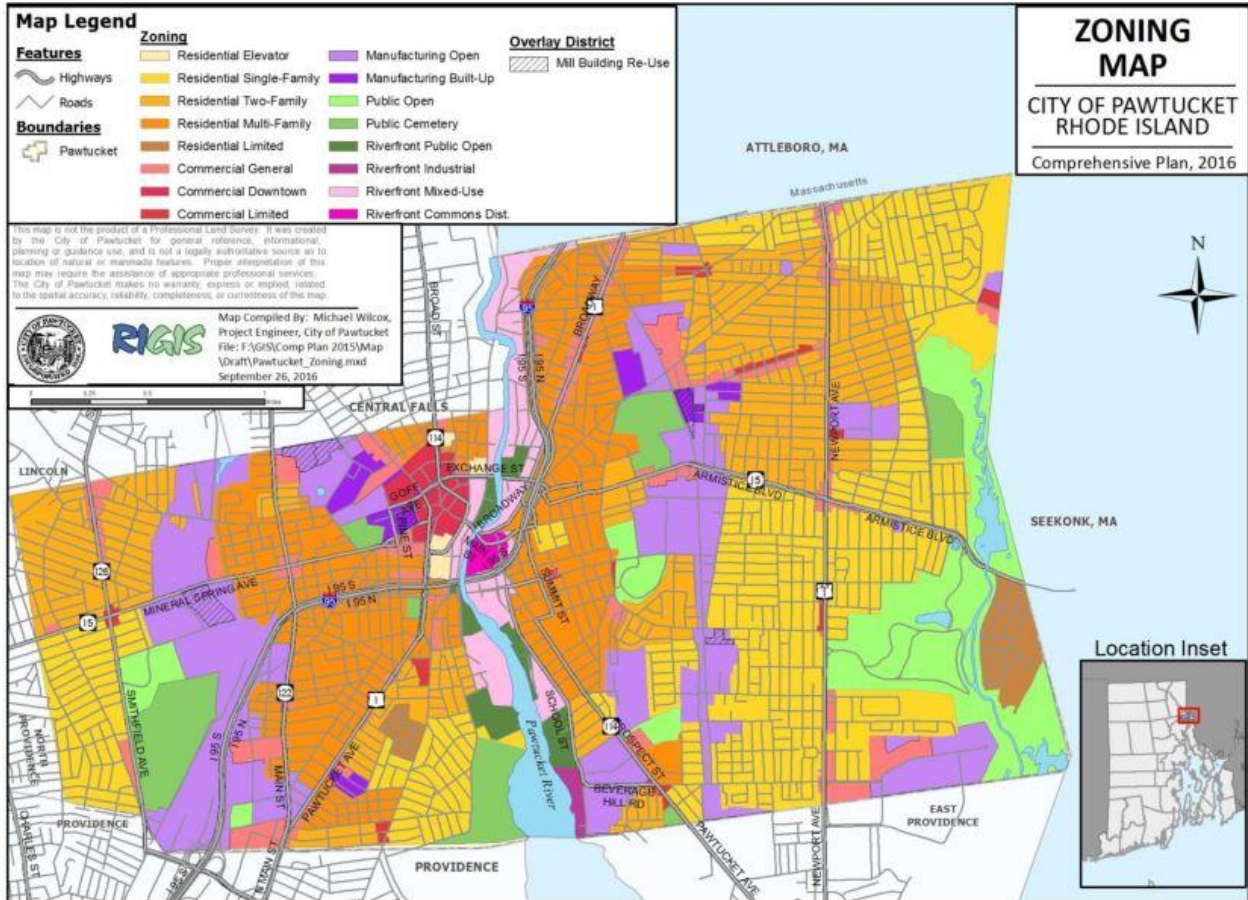


Figure 3 Zoning Map, City of Pawtucket

### iv. The Apex Properties Are Blighted and Substandard Areas.

A determination was made by the PRA in Amendment No. 15 that the Apex Properties are blighted and substandard.

In Section 16 of Ordinance Chapter 3714, approved December 16, 2018, the City Council resolved that “[b]ased on, among other factors, (1) the information and data provided in [Amendment No. 15], (ii) the ‘blight opinions’ annexed to [Amendment No. 15], and (3) the testimony of witnesses at the November 7, 2018 hearing, the Pawtucket City Council hereby finds that the [Apex] Properties constitute a ‘blighted and substandard area’ and require clearance, replanning, redevelopment, rehabilitation, or improvement or any combination thereof.”

#### IV. INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS OF THIS AMENDMENT

The intent of the Redevelopment Plan is to rehabilitate deteriorated properties, visually enhance the Redevelopment Area, provide needed infrastructure to support redevelopment, create employment opportunities, and encourage excellence in design and construction techniques, all in a way that is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. One of the actions of this Amendment is to establish the Downtown Gateway Project Area (See Figure 4) in order to enable the redevelopment within the boundaries. Figure 4 also shows the location of the Apex properties. These properties, with the City rights of way, make up the Project Area and these terms are used interchangeably with this amendment. This Project Area will include recreational projects (as defined in R.I Gen. Laws § 42-34-6(4), with planned redevelopment of the surrounding areas. As indicated below, the redevelopment will be financed by incremental tax revenues pursuant to chapters 31, 32, 33, 33.2 and 33.4 of title 45.



Figure 4. Downtown Pawtucket Gateway Project Area

The redevelopment will create and/or preserve jobs within the state and is a public use of statewide concern and is in the interest of, and for the benefit of, the citizens of the state, and will contribute substantially to the social and economic well-being of the citizens of the state, and will significantly enhance the economic development and employment opportunities with the state.

It is judged by the PRA that the acquisition of the Apex Properties is in the public interest and necessary for the public use.

The following outlines initiatives and actions that the PRA intends to pursue in order to meet the goals of the Redevelopment Plan, as well as the State requirements outlined in Title 45, Chapter 32 of the R.I. Gen. Laws.

### ***A. Property Acquisitions***

The City Council will authorize the PRA to acquire the Apex Properties in order, among other things, to open up the riverfront so that those properties may be used for recreational purposes and to redevelop portions of the Apex Properties. The "Apex Properties" are comprised of 100 Main Street - the Apex building (Plat 23, Lot 553), 101 Main Street – Berry Building (Plat 23, Lot 670), 1 School Street, also known as 33 Main Street – Apex Tire Center (Plat 23, Lot 562), 10 School Street – Apex overflow parking lot (Plat 23, Lot 542 and 46 Main Street – former St. George's Church site (Plat 23, Lot 541). These parcels are shown in Figure 4.

This authority granted to the PRA under Amendment No. 17 to acquire the Apex Properties applies to both (i) a consensual purchase of the Apex Properties, if an agreement can be reached between representatives of the City and the Apex Companies or, (ii) if no such agreement can be reached, an eminent domain acquisition of the Apex Properties under R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-32-24.1 et seq.

City representatives have had regular, cordial and good faith negotiations with representatives of the Apex Ownership Group for a period of over two (2) years in order to attempt to agree upon a consensual purchase price for the Apex Properties. This has included an unsuccessful formal mediation in 2018 and direct negotiations with representatives of the Apex Ownership Group during 2019 and 2020, which have also been unsuccessful.

The City remains ready, willing and hopeful to be able to continue to work with Apex representatives to bring a development consistent with Amendment Nos. 15 and 17. The City would prefer to acquire the Apex Properties through a consensual sale. Accordingly, the City's hopes that the Apex Companies will continue negotiations with the City in order to attempt to finally reach common ground allowing for a consensual sale.

If and after the City Council approves an ordinance approving Amendment No. 17, then, at such time as the PRA decides it is appropriate, the PRA will take a vote, as prescribed under R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-32-24.2(g), as to whether it is necessary to acquire the Apex Properties by eminent

domain.

At such time as the PRA may vote that it is necessary to acquire the Apex Properties by eminent domain, the PRA is authorized to and shall take all necessary actions in order for the PRA to acquire the Apex Properties by eminent domain pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-32-24.2(g) *et seq.*

**i. Apex Properties Acquisition Funding:**

The City expects to pay for the property acquisition, predevelopment and financing costs by the PRA's issuance of temporary notes payable from project revenues, lease arrangements, mortgage arrangements, or payments that are subject to annual appropriation of funds by the City, until permanent financing is available payable from tax increment revenues. In no event shall the full faith and credit and taxing power of the City be pledged directly or indirectly to the payment of long term financing.

**ii. Apex Properties Ownership:**

The PRA shall own the Apex Properties. As the owner of the Apex Properties, the PRA shall have the right to use the Apex Properties for public and other redevelopment purposes.

***B. Redevelopment***

The PRA and the City will undertake the following redevelopment initiatives with respect to the Apex Properties, as depicted in the Apex Properties Concept Plan, Figure 5.

The proposed redevelopment includes significant recreation amenities, along with mixed use development. The City has been working since 1997 to create a linear pathway along both sides of the Blackstone River. The location of the Apex Properties is an important link in that network, providing access to the south and also across Main Street, linking to the west side of the River and the new National Park at Slater Mill. Opening up views to the River at this location is an important part of both the recreational and commercial components. The City plans to have a passive park, along the River, to capture the views of the Main Street Falls. The park is also proposed to contain amenities like a playground or splash park, as Downtown Pawtucket is in need of these types of recreation activities for families.

The remainder of the parcel will be used for a mixed-use redevelopment, according to the vision set by the City Comprehensive Plan. The redevelopment will include commercial and residential densities which are appropriate to its proximity to Downtown Pawtucket. The PRA will prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment. The RFP will include guidelines for the proposals, to ensure that any proposed redevelopment is consistent with the goals for redevelopment outlined here, and consistent with the City Comprehensive Plan.





Figure 5. Concept Plan for Downtown Gateway Project Area

**Buildings or Structures to be Demolished and Removed:**

Demolition of the existing Apex retail building and any other commercial structures located on the other four parcels may be required for redevelopment. The existing Apex retail store is primarily vacant with limited use for storage, a distribution center and retail purposes. It has not been fully utilized as a retail location in over 15 years. The Apex Site was originally acquired by the PRA in 1969 and sold to its present owners for development as a retail center.

## V. CONFORMANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

***The Redevelopment Plan amendment must be in conformation with the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan.***

The redevelopment of the Apex Properties in the manner contemplated in Amendment No. 17 conforms to the City's 2017 Comprehensive Plan, as the same may have been amended from time to time. The proposed uses of the Apex Properties for redevelopment are in full conformance with the Future Land Use Map of the City's 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Contemplated land uses for the Apex Properties include recreation and a mix of residential and commercial uses, including retail and office space.

The Future Land Use map also shows the designation of the Pawtucket Downtown Growth Center, within which the Apex Properties are located. The Comprehensive Plan states that the PDGC designation is intended to indicate that "this area is the focus of many of the City's redevelopment efforts; including initiatives related to economic development..." The Comprehensive Plan further states that "Designation of the PDGC gives the City the opportunity to provide incentives for public and private investment in the future. The area is the social, cultural and economic hub of the City..."

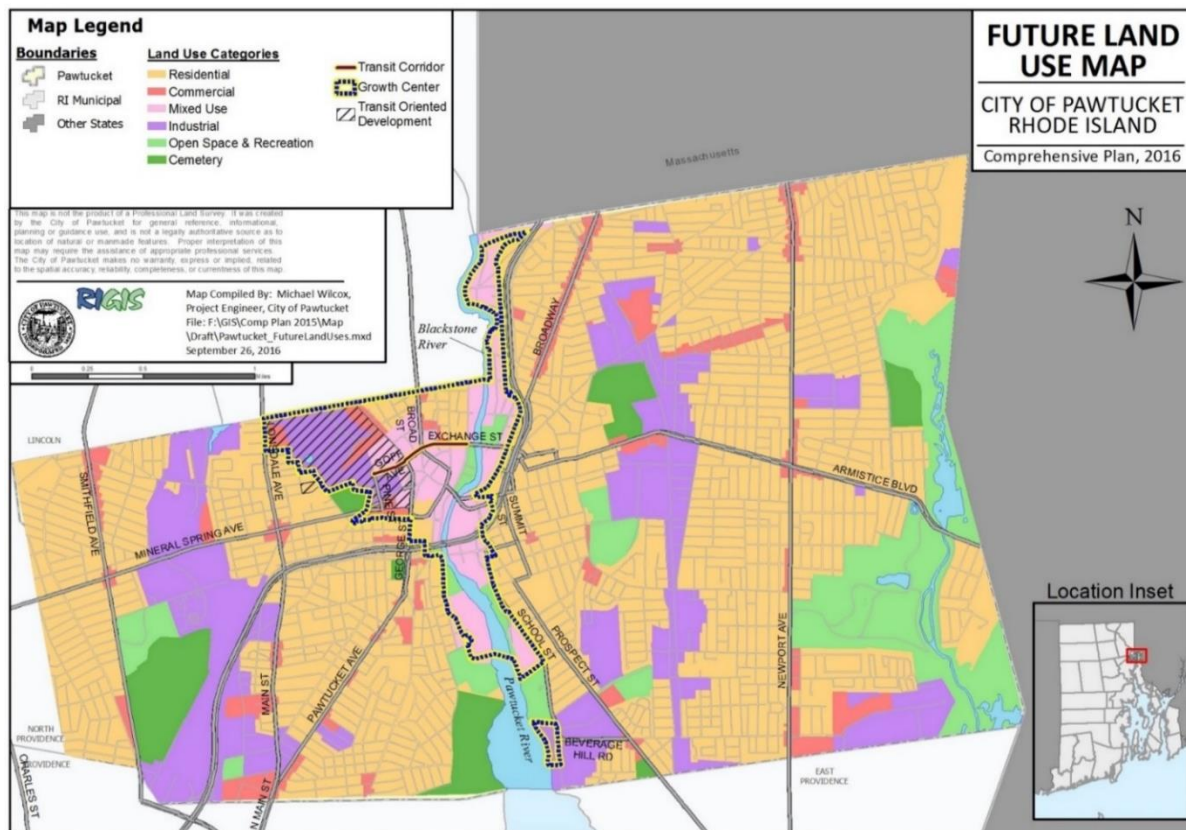


Figure 6. Future Land Use Map with Growth Center

Beyond the designation of the Growth Center, this Amendment is consistent with many of the elements of the Pawtucket Comprehensive Plan, as well as other plans that have been developed in support, or implementation of the City Comprehensive Plan. The goals, objectives and policies set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, met by Amendment No. 17 are as follows:

- Land Use Objective #4 is to increase the amount of available public recreation areas. *This proposal includes an increase in public recreation area.*
- Land Use Policy #8 recommends the implementation of the *Riverfront Development Plan*. The *Riverfront Development Plan*, completed in 1997, set the stage for successful future zoning and land use policy changes, which encouraged mixed use and public access along the City's river. Specific actions of this Plan, under Public Access, are to create linear greenways along both sides of the Blackstone River, from north to south, and to open up visual access to the river, through landscaping and selective clearing. *This proposal includes a greenway along the river, with pedestrian connections to the south, along the river, to the Tidewater redevelopment.*
- Land Use Policy #9 further emphasizes the need to "[w]herever possible, encourage pedestrian and bicycle links along the riverfront as well as throughout the City." *This proposal includes a greenway along the river, with pedestrian connections to the south, along the river, to the Tidewater redevelopment.*

Other sections of the Comprehensive Plan also underscore the goals of this project:

- Natural Resources Policy #12. Consider the acquisition of undeveloped properties along the City's waterways as potential areas of natural resource protection. *Part of Pawtucket's work on the riverfront, includes an emphasis on the re-establishment of native species. Riverfront access will be balanced with the protection of natural resources.*
- *In addition, Pawtucket has been working with RIDEM and the US Fish and Wildlife agency to introduce fish ladders to the dams on Blackstone – the Slater Mill Dam and the Main Street Dam. The recreation amenities included in the redevelopment plan include public open space, along the river, near the Main Street dam. This provides an opportunity for interpretation and education around the City's history and natural resources.*
- Recreation Goal #3. Develop recreation resources that link recreation sites, cultural sites, natural resource sites, etc., including the Blackstone River Valley Bikeway, the Ten Mile River Bikeway, walkways along both sides of the Pawtucket River. *The walkways proposed as part of this redevelopment will connect to the Blackstone Bikeway and also to the new National Park.*
- Recreation Goal #4. Provide access to the river for Pawtucket residents. *This project will improve visual access to the river, and provide pedestrian links to locations with physical access to the River.*

- Recreation Goal #5. Improve bicycle access throughout the City. *The proposed redevelopment plan is consistent with the bicycle planning that has been done within Pawtucket.*
- Transportation Goal #3. Improve and maintain the integrity, efficiency and safety of pedestrian, bus, auto, and bicycle infrastructure city wide. *The location of this redevelopment provides the opportunity for it to be a nexus, connecting pedestrian walkways, the Blackstone Valley Bikeway, and also local roadways. Designing the auto, bus, pedestrian and bicycle connections in and around the redevelopment in a safe, attractive and efficient manner is a priority.*

*Pawtucket and Central Falls recently completed a Bicycle Master Plan. This assessed city streets and made recommendations on how to improve bike access in and around the cities. The Pawtucket streets that run through the Apex Properties lead to and from the Downtown: Main Street and Broadway Street are entrance points to the Downtown and the Blackstone River Bikeway, which is adjacent to the Apex Properties and runs north and south along Roosevelt Avenue. School Street, Water Street, Broadway Street and Main Street are the streets that run through or adjacent to the Apex Properties; these are all included in recommendations in the PCF Walk-Bike Master Plan for walking and/or biking improvements. Current conditions on these streets do not lend themselves for cyclists to easily traverse them. Potential redevelopment of the Apex site presents the opportunity to improve biking conditions through adding additional bicycle infrastructure connecting to the Downtown and Blackstone River Bikeway. Bikeway improvements of this site would also help connect cyclists to the Tidewater Development along Division Street and the City-owned park, Festival Pier.*

The Recreation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan also specifically identified the need for more public recreation resources in two areas of Pawtucket – one of these areas is the Downtown. This redevelopment project provides the opportunity to provide additional public recreation resources. Amenities, such as playgrounds and splash parks, and playgrounds are proposed as part of the recreation components of the Gateway Project.

Recently, the Department of the Interior identified Slater Mill as part of a newly designated National Park. The City has been working with the National Park Service and the Blackstone Valley Corridor Commission, on the process for establishing the park. Pawtucket has recognized that this designation has the potential to improve economic development potential within the City, as Slater Park becomes part of the National Park system. The City's work with its partners are to support the Park, and to leverage additional economic benefit. The development of recreation resources at the "Apex Site," which connect to Slater Park, by the Main Street Bridge over the Blackstone River, has the potential to extend the stay of visitors to the National Park and connect them with the River, the Blackstone Valley Bikeway and the Tidewater Redevelopment to the south.

This project also complies with a number of the goals, policies and objectives in the Economic Development Chapter of the 2017 Plan, including both general goals and specific objectives:

- Goal ED #1- "Make Pawtucket a high-performance local economy with a diversity of employment opportunities"
- Goal ED #2 – "Build a reputation as a great place to do business"
- Goal ED #3 – "Promote economic growth that capitalizes in the City's strengths"
- Goal ED #4 – "Use the Growth Center as focus for economic development"
- Objective ED #1 – "Decrease the amount of vacant square footage within the historic downtown Pawtucket by 5% in 10 years."
- Objective ED #2- "Increase the number of businesses in Pawtucket."
- Objective ED #3- "Increase the number of jobs in Pawtucket".
- Objective ED #4- "Clean up 10 acres of contaminated property in 10 years."
- Policy ED #1- "Support development that creates a strong, diverse and vital commercial downtown."
- Policy ED #2- "Utilize the tax stabilization ordinance and other economic incentives as a means to encourage the expansion of economic development."

## **VI. Downtown Pawtucket Gateway Project Information**

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### ***A. Land Coverage, Building Intensities and Population Density***

Land coverage will increase as land is developed in the Apex Properties. Underutilized lands will be put into productive use, which will increase land coverage in a manner consistent with adjacent development. The density of the proposed redevelopment is consistent with the density that is desirable in a downtown location.

### ***B. Zoning***

The Apex Properties are zoned Riverfront Commons. There are no proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance for the Apex Properties.

### ***C. Changes to Streets and Utilities***

There are changes to the street network proposed, which would improve the safety and efficiency of the existing roadways. In addition, the streets would be modified to provide safe access for bicycles.

### ***D. Relocation***

It is not anticipated that extensive relocation efforts will have to be undertaken in order to carry out the objectives of this Amendment. There are no residential relocations required.

The PRA will assist in the relocation of businesses, individuals and families displaced from Apex Properties acquired by the PRA in accordance with State and Federal laws. The City will work with the property owner to identify available retail spaces within the City of Pawtucket suitable for relocation of the existing retail establishments.

The PRA will make relocation payments to displaced businesses for moving and related expenses, as outlined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-31-26 *et seq.* (In the case of business concerns, relocation payments are capped at \$7,500. R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-31-27.)

### ***E. Covenants and other Restrictions for Disposal and Future Land Use and Buildings***

New uses of the Apex Properties would have to conform to the purposes outlined in the Redevelopment Plan. This will be ensured through covenants and other restrictions imposed by the PRA and binding on the Apex Properties. These covenants and restrictions shall include conformance with the City's Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan, special covenants governing development and use of relevant properties, including design construction and usage restrictions, timelines for development, and otherwise, and shall require property sold by the PRA to be subject to standard performance and reversion provisions commonly imposed by the

PRA on properties to be developed or rehabilitated in a Project Area within a Redevelopment Area.

***F. Costs and Financing***

The PRA intends to acquire the Apex Properties. It is anticipated that the costs of acquisition, infrastructure and improvement for public open space will be approximately \$20 million in the aggregate.

Financing for the Redevelopment Plan set forth in this Amendment will be through the PRA. Under this Redevelopment Plan, the PRA, subject to all applicable laws, regulations, and related approvals, shall have the authority to seek public and private funding sources to implement the action items that support redevelopment of the Apex Properties in accordance with this Amendment. The PRA intends to finance the project through the issuance of temporary notes payable from project revenues, lease arrangements, mortgage arrangements, or payments that are subject to annual appropriation of funds by the City, until permanent financing is available payable from tax increment revenues. In no event shall the full faith and credit and taxing power of the City be pledged directly or indirectly to the payment of long term financing.

***G. Statement of Purpose***

It is the public policy as stated in R.I. Gen. Laws § 45-31-6 to protect and promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the people of the State and particularly of the people of the communities of the State, in which blighted and substandard areas exist, by the elimination and prevention of these areas through the utilization of all means appropriate for that purpose, thereby encouraging the provision of healthful homes, a decent living environment and adequate places for employment of the people of this state and its communities in these areas through redevelopment.

Through the acquisition of the Apex Properties, this Redevelopment Plan carries out the purposes of the Redevelopment Act of 1956.

***H. Duration and Effective Date***

The foregoing regulations and controls contained in Amendment No. 17 will be binding, effectively by deed or by contract containing restrictive covenants running with the land, upon all purchasers or contractors and their heirs and assigns of the land within the Redevelopment Area of the City covered by this Redevelopment Plan. The regulations and controls incorporated in this Redevelopment Plan will be effective from the date of approval by ordinance of this Redevelopment Plan by the City Council.

**Appendix A PRA Resolution**



**Appendix B - City Council Resolution**