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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic and Architectural Resources of Providence (RI), 1636-present

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Historic and Architectural Development of Providence (RI), 1636-present

C. Geographical Data

Incorporated limits of City of Providence, Providence County, Rhode Island.

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.



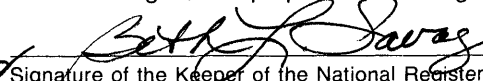
Signature of certifying official

3 Jan 1990

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.



3/15/90

Date

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

I. PROVIDENCE: THE TEXTURE OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The city of Providence has a special sense of place, a unique physical character evocative of its 350-year history yet clearly part of the present. One of the oldest of America's cities, Providence has been built and rebuilt by her citizens many times creating a complex layering of different generations' building needs, plans for civic growth, and architectural tastes. Providence's streets and neighborhoods are not museum set-pieces; they exhibit all the variety which a long history and a diverse population have created. This lack of uniformity is part of Providence's charm, for the city's social, economic, and architectural history can be read in the physical form of individual buildings and in the differences among neighborhoods. Providence's topography and historic roads are keys to the city's particular atmosphere, for the land and the roads have influenced the overall pattern of development more than have plans or conscious decision making.

Providence's topography — its hills, plains, and bodies of water — is a product of millions of years of geologic evolution. Situated at the head of Narragansett Bay and at the confluence of the Seekonk, Moshassuck, and Woonasquatucket Rivers, the city spreads over a topographical basin. Its low center, at the confluence of the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers, is enclosed on the north by Smith Hill. The steep north-south ridge of College Hill and Mount Hope separates the Moshassuck River Valley from the Seekonk River, the city's boundary to the east, dividing Providence into east and west sides. Federal Hill rises gently west of the central basin and falls steeply to the Woonasquatucket River. The land farther north and west of the rivers rises sometimes gently, sometimes abruptly, to an undulating upland, reaching a maximum height of more than 200 feet at Neutaconkanut Hill on Providence's western border. In the southwest a low rising plain extends from the shore of Narragansett Bay.

Water plays an important role in the city's geography. Providence Harbor is the north end of Narragansett Bay. The harbor's two main tributaries are the Seekonk River, naviga-

ble to Pawtucket, and the Providence River, the name given the tidal stream south of the coming together of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers. These rivers and harbor were Providence's principal link to the world for most of its first 200 years. During the nineteenth century, the rivers saw intensive industrial development. Neglected in the twentieth century, they nevertheless remain a prominent topographical feature of potential scenic value.

The pre-eminent urban center and capital of Rhode Island, Providence is a medium-size, post-industrial, Northeast city. The 1980 population was 156,804, a decrease of over 22,000 from 1970 and 100,000 less than its all-time peak in 1940. Just over four-fifths of this population is white, while over ten percent is black, and slightly more than one percent is Asian. Far more significant — although statistically unrecorded — is the ethnic composition of this population. Large immigrant groups of Irish, Italians, Portuguese, Armenians, Russian Jews, and — more recently — Hispanics and Southeast Asians comprise important and distinct segments of the population. Not only are these groups present in Providence, but they also retain their ethnic identities, even after several generations. While ethnic neighborhoods are now less strictly defined than in years gone by, several maintain their flavor: Fox Point continues as a Portuguese stronghold, while Federal Hill is a center of Italian culture. Providence today is ethnically pluralistic, dominated neither by one ethnic group nor by a homogenous population.

Providence's buildings and structures are situated across this landscape in a pattern of distinctive neighborhoods. The site of the earliest settlement here coincides with the center of today's city, and the earliest roads — North and South Main, Angell, Olney, Weybosset, Westminster, and Broad Streets, some of them pre-existing Indian paths — fan out from this settlement. Providence's radiating road pattern, tempered somewhat by topographical peculiarities, established the organizational framework for the city's expansion beyond its original settlement. Beyond the central business district, which follows an irregular grid pattern, the street system follows no particular plan: grids of varying sizes and plats of straight parallel blocks are flung randomly across the landscape, and only rarely is the street pattern related to the topography. The railroad tracks follow the riverbeds of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck through the city, and limited-access highways are superimposed on the city and

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only occasionally follow the railroads or shorelines. Perhaps the most telling aspect of Providence's urban character as a metropolitan center is its lack of apparent borders: the city spreads seamlessly across political boundaries into Pawtucket, North Providence, Johnston, and Cranston.

Providence is a city of old buildings and old neighborhoods. The area on and around Main and Benefit Streets, where settlement first occurred, retains an impressive number of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century buildings. Immediately west of the Providence River is Downtown, a nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial district which culminates at its eastern end in a compact cluster of tall office buildings. To the north and west of Downtown, the rivers are lined with industrial buildings. South of Downtown and along the west side of the Providence Harbor are docks and warehouses. Beyond the commercial center and industrial corridors, however, Providence is largely a residential city, a web of neighborhoods, each distinct in character yet difficult to delineate. The neighborhoods represent irregular, concentric bands of growth from the early core. The earlier nineteenth-century areas are located closer to the center, though those on the west side have been somewhat eroded by highway construction and urban blight. Later development in the nineteenth century is generally farther from Downtown, and the great variety of building types erected contributes to the unplanned, patchwork effect of the city. Only in far-flung areas like Mount Pleasant/Elmhurst and Blackstone/Wayland that developed in the twentieth century are the buildings somewhat more uniform in type and scale. Scattered irregularly across this residential landscape, various public buildings were erected to serve area residents: schools, churches, and fire and police stations. Most of these buildings were standing by 1940, and they share a general consistency of scale. Only a few areas have been radically changed since 1940, most notably in the industrial corridors along the rivers, along the shorelines, and in random, isolated spots across the city. This new development introduces buildings of scale and siting vastly different from what came before; these redeveloped areas are disjunctive elements in otherwise varied, but related, patterns within the texture of urban development.

Providence in the 1980s looks far different from the small settlement that Roger Williams and his band established in the seventeenth century. This transformation from wilderness settlement to metropolitan center has been drastic, but

incremental. The earliest buildings lined the east side of North and South Main Streets along the Great Salt Cove, a sprawling tidal estuary formed by the Providence River. Unlike many other New England settlements, there was no central common space around which the town was organized nor any sort of formal plan. This unplanned quality has remained a constant factor in Providence's metropolitan development and reinforces a certain intimacy of scale throughout the city; such texture is at odds with the grand schemes of most urban planning.

Providence's location at the head of Narragansett Bay made it attractive as a port, and much of the city's development in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries took place because of or in response to maritime activity. The west side of North and South Main Streets — followed by India Point and the west side of the Providence River — filled with wharves and warehouses. The income from sea trade provided the means for construction of the mansions for merchants as well as dense residential development in Fox Point for sailors, chandlers, and other tradesmen.

During the nineteenth century industrialization played a leading role in the transformation of the small maritime community into a large city. The Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers were built up with mills, creating a meandering industrial corridor through the heart of the city in addition to isolated factories. Moreover, the industrial economy demanded growth and proliferation of banks, insurance companies, brokerages, and law offices located Downtown. Providence had centered around Market Square in the eighteenth century, but the large-scale central business district of today is the product of Providence's emergence as the commercial and retail center for an industrialized metropolitan area.

The factories required an increasingly larger work force, and succeeding waves of immigrants from Britain and Europe came to Providence because of employment opportunities. Much of the growth in population from nearly 12,000 in 1825 to over 267,000 in 1925 was due to immigration. These new citizens of Providence needed places to live, shop, learn, and worship as well as to work, and the ring of neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown and industrial corridor developed during this century. At first, immigrant groups occupied the cast-off housing of residents of longer standing, then often moved to newer two- or three-family dwellings removed from the deteriorated inner-city slums.

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As each successive group achieved some financial stability, later immigrant groups replaced them in the worst housing, and the earlier immigrant groups moved up and out. The lowest level of cheap housing has since disappeared, but the sturdier tenements of the nineteenth century remain in significant numbers, a physical reminder of the rapidly changing socio-economic profile of the city during these years.

Changes in transportation systems during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have had considerable effects on the city's form. The coming of the railroad in the 1830s first established rapid overland links with other commercial centers in the region. In the late 1840s the consolidation of the rail lines in Union Station, on the north side of Downtown, underlined the importance of the area as the state's commercial center. Its route through the city, along the Woonasquatucket then north along the Moshassuck, encouraged further industrialization of this corridor and improved shipping connections for the mills and factories already in this area. Streetcars began to operate in Providence in 1864, and by the end of the nineteenth century a new mass-transit system extended throughout the city and beyond its borders. The streetcars encouraged residential development beyond walking distance from Downtown or factories. Importantly the streetcars followed existing streets and so reinforced development trends already established. In the twentieth century the automobile diminished reliance on public transportation and made residential development practicable ever farther afield in previously rural areas of outlying towns and often at the expense of Providence's inner-city areas. The automobile also strained the city's existing infrastructure, requiring both road widenings and the creation of parking space. Finally, the interstate highway system skewered the city from north to south in the 1950s and 1960s, generally ignoring the established transportation corridors and requiring massive demolition and disruption.

Providence's settlement and early growth did not follow a formal plan, nor did the city attempt to control its growth through the adoption of a master plan until the twentieth century. This attitude was common among American cities in the nineteenth century, and most so-called planning efforts were limited in scope — though not necessarily in impact. The earliest of these here was dealing with the Salt Cove. For a hundred years, residents built wharves and filled in land as convenience dictated. In the 1840s, however, an overall plan was needed in order to construct railroad lines

into Union Station, and the cove was reduced to an elliptical basin with a tree-lined promenade along its circumference. Other nineteenth-century efforts were primarily landscaping: the laying out of Roger Williams Park and the creation of Blackstone Boulevard. The reworking of the covelands at the end of the nineteenth century illustrates the increased attention to planning: it included filling the Cove Basin and re-routing the rivers, moving the railroad tracks, constructing a new Union Station above the existing grade, sitework for the new State House just north of Downtown, landscaping of the enlarged Exchange Place in front of the station, and — ultimately — the linking of the State House with Downtown.

The City Plan Commission was established in 1913, but it had little effect in its early years beyond achieving the adoption of a zoning code in 1923 and a building code in 1927. The zoning code as first adopted reinforced existing conditions rather than directed future growth. In 1944, the City Plan Commission was reorganized. For the first time a paid professional staff was hired, and a master plan and new zoning ordinance were adopted. The Providence Redevelopment Agency, created in 1948, had a considerable impact on the city during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s clearing deteriorated areas and creating new industrial, commercial, and residential areas. Another urban renewal project was *College Hill*, a landmark study in historic preservation, published in 1957, which led to the restoration of the city's oldest neighborhood.

Providence retains and increasingly exploits its historic setting, unlike other cities which have inadvertently lost, ignored, or destroyed the evidence of their past. Although the mid-twentieth-century has been a time of increasing similarity among many American cities, Providence has not lost its landmarks, its uniqueness, and its special sense of place.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of Providence was not a uniform or continuous process. The city's varied geography has been put to a variety of different uses, and the demand for land and its availability have fluctuated widely in response to the circumstances and opportunities of different moments in history. For the first two centuries, the most densely built-up part of town centered on the harbor and was surrounded by sparsely settled lands devoted to farms, country estates, hospitals, and cemeteries. Between 1836 and 1936 the outlying territory was largely developed. Land which offered access to water and to transportation facilities was taken over by Providence's industries, and other areas were developed for housing the city's burgeoning population. The lands farthest from the city-center were developed last.

While the development of each area occurred as part of Providence's overall growth, each district and neighborhood has a unique and separate history. The brief neighborhood histories which follow describe events and people who were most responsible for creating each neighborhood, and they provide a local context in which to understand individual historic buildings. However, these histories do not attempt to provide all the details of the neighborhood's development. Additional information about many historic buildings is available in the inventory. More comprehensive studies of Federal Hill, South Providence, Elmwood, Smith Hill, Downtown, and Blackstone-Wayland (in progress) have been published by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission and are available in most libraries. College Hill was the subject of an in-depth planning and historical study published by the Providence City Plan Commission in 1959.

The Providence citywide survey has divided the city into seventeen neighborhoods which have been identified by the age and architectural characteristics of their buildings and historical impetus for their growth. The boundaries of these neighborhoods generally correspond to community-wide perceptions and to the Department of Planning's official list of City neighborhoods. However, in some cases study of the history and architecture of an area — such as Mount Pleasant and Elmhurst — is best accomplished by considering two or more neighborhoods as a single unit. Three areas —

the Waterfront, the Jewelry District, and the Moshassuck-Woonasquatucket River Corridor — are not neighborhoods in the usual sense, but rather are districts whose buildings are related by geography and function. Historically, the boundaries between neighborhoods are not clear-cut, and to an extent all such divisions are arbitrary since the original developers of areas rarely thought in such terms. Likewise, more than one name frequently has been used to identify a neighborhood or part of a neighborhood in the past, and the names used in this report generally follow current usage. Boundaries for these neighborhoods, here loosely defined, are delineated on a map in Appendix B.

BLACKSTONE-WAYLAND

The Blackstone-Wayland neighborhood is a large residential tract in the city's northeast corner on Providence's East Side. It developed primarily during the early and mid-twentieth century as an expansion to the east of the type and quality of housing erected on College Hill in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Most of the houses are medium-to-large single-family dwellings, though multiple-family dwellings are not unusual. The neighborhood, further, has the city's most significant concentration of apartment buildings, all built after 1900. It is one of the few neighborhoods in the city where considerable building has occurred in the present century.

The area's geography made it uninviting for colonial settlement. Lying within a shallow north-south valley between the eastern ridge of the Moshassuck River Valley and the western bank of the Seekonk River, much of the land was marshy. Early roads followed the high ground: Cat Swamp Lane (1684) followed today's Olney Street, Morris Avenue, Sessions Street, and Cole Avenue to Rochambeau Avenue. Rochambeau Avenue ran east from North Main to the Neck Road (today's Old Road in Swan Point Cemetery), which ran north to Pawtucket. A road along Angell and South Angell Streets connected the early settlement on College Hill with a ferry across the Seekonk.

Several farms were established here in the eighteenth century. These included the Reverend Arthur Browne's glebe on Sessions Street, Richard Browne's farms at the eastern end of Rochambeau Avenue and on Cole Farm Court, Moses Brown's country retreat near the intersection of Way-

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land and Humboldt Avenues, and two Brown family farms on Rochambeau Avenue and at the intersection of Eames Street and Morris Avenue. Remarkably, four of these farmhouses remain.

The isolation and scenic beauty of the region — particularly the bluffs overlooking the Seekonk River — made the area appealing for institutional growth in the mid-nineteenth century. Butler Hospital, one of the oldest psychiatric

institutions in the country, is located on the Richard Browne Farm at the end of Rochambeau Avenue; the hospital's picturesque Gothic architecture and landscaped rural setting were aspects of an overall plan to remove the patients from the stresses of the everyday world. Swan Point Cemetery, a product of the nation's rural cemetery movement of the 1830s and 1840s, was established just north of Butler Hospital in 1847.

Blackstone-Wayland's development as a middle- and upper-income residential neighborhood began in the middle years of the nineteenth century at its southern end — along Pitman Street — and continued northward at a varying pace for the following century. The Cold Spring Plat (1856) included the area south of Angell Street. Despite the construction of several cottages here after this platting, the area's remoteness proved inhospitable to growth. Similarly, the platting of Moses Brown's retreat, "Elm Grove," in the 1860s and 1870s was followed by little immediate construction save for a handful of houses along Wayland and Humboldt Avenues. The land south of Upton Avenue had been completely platted by the end of the Civil War, but few houses were built here much before the 1890s. Instead, development moved eastward from College Hill in the Waterman-Angell corridor and, to a lesser extent, followed the high ground along Olney Street and Morris Avenue.

Until the 1880s, transportation between this area and the rest of Providence was either by private carriage or by public horsecar along a circuitous route from Downtown through Fox Point to Butler Avenue. A second line began service along Waterman and Angell Streets in 1884. The major transportation improvement of the time, however, was a collaboration between the Proprietors of Swan Point Cemetery and the city to construct a landscaped boulevard two

hundred feet wide and connecting the Waterman-Angell corridor on the south with Hope Street on the north at the Pawtucket city line. Completed in 1894, the boulevard was landscaped by Olmsted & Olmsted of Brookline, Massachusetts and remains one of the city's finest examples of planning and landscape architecture; as intended, this magnificent setting indeed encouraged construction of "substantial and comfortable homes," for land values tripled here between 1890 and 1923.

The completion of improved transportation links here coincided with a period of tremendous growth of population and prosperity for the city. While the western edge of College Hill began to decline, many middle- and upper-income families moved east into the Blackstone-Wayland neighborhood. Ample single-family houses, many of them architect designed, filled block after block around the turn of the century.

While much of the neighborhood's development was relatively unguided, two real estate development companies in the early years of the twentieth century took a more comprehensive approach to platting, landscaping, and development. Between 1917 and 1922, John R. Freeman platted two hundred house lots in the area formerly occupied by Cat Swamp along Hazard Avenue, Freeman Parkway, and Barberry Hill Road; planting and building restrictions made this an attractive and uniform area. Soon after, the Blackstone Boulevard Realty Company undertook a similar development in the Great Swamp area north of Rochambeau Avenue.

In addition to these single-family dwellings, the neighborhood contains a number of apartment buildings. The earliest of these were built along Medway Street during the first decade of the twentieth century. By 1940, similar structures had been built on Waterman and Angell Streets as well as along less heavily traveled streets, like Lloyd, Irving, and Wayland Avenues.

Institutional growth in the twentieth century — unlike Butler or Swan Point — has been neighborhood oriented. Central Baptist Church on Lloyd Avenue, St. Martin's Episcopal Church on Orchard Avenue, and St. Sebastian's Roman Catholic Church on Cole Avenue were built in 1916 to

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serve the growing population. Two public schools, John Howland (1917, now demolished) and Nathan Bishop (1930), educated the area's children. Two temples, Emanu El (1928) on Morris Avenue and Beth El (1954) on Orchard Avenue, both still active, served the neighborhood's large Jewish population.

Residential development in Blackstone-Wayland continued after World War II. Butler Hospital sold part of its property east of Blackstone Boulevard between Rochambeau and Clarendon Avenues. Brown University, while retaining its football stadium (1925) and Marvel Gymnasium (1927) on Elmgrove Avenue, sold the adjacent land formerly used as playing fields, and new houses rose between Elmgrove and Cole Avenues north of Sessions Street.

The Blackstone-Wayland neighborhood is notable for the quality of its architecture — both domestic and institutional — and for its general suburban ambience. Its buildings tell an important part of the story of suburban development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and its proximity to the central part of Providence ties it to urban themes as well. This duality to a great extent accounts for the area's continuing popularity and dynamism.

COLLEGE HILL

College Hill is the site of the first permanent colonial settlement in Rhode Island. Its history includes events of both local and national importance, and its buildings comprise the city's most distinguished body of historic architecture. Located on a steep hill which rises from the east bank of the Providence River, the neighborhood is primarily residential. Institutions have played an important role in College Hill, and an east-west corridor of institutional buildings developed in the center of College Hill during the twentieth century. Commercial use has historically lined the western edge of College Hill, along the river and North and South Main Streets, and remains generally limited to this area.

From its founding in 1636 until the late eighteenth century, almost the entire settled area of Providence occupied land in College Hill along the Providence River. Here, Roger Williams and others built houses, planted gardens, and farmed surrounding lands. Later generations pursued maritime commerce and made Providence into an international seaport.

By the time of the American Revolution, the narrow band of land at the eastern shore of the river at the foot of the hill was densely built with wharves, warehouses, shops, public buildings, and houses mixed together. Benefit Street, established in 1756, was still sparsely settled, and University Hall at Brown (1770) stood in isolation atop College Hill at the intersection of College and Prospect Streets. Several other key public buildings — all still standing — date from this period: the Old State House (1762), the Brick School House (1767), the Market House (1773), and the First Baptist Meeting House (1775).

Post-war expansion of Providence resulted in a surge of building activity on both sides of the river. On College Hill, dwellings were built farther up the hillside along Benefit Street to house merchants, artisans, and professionals. Many of these two-and-a-half-story, clapboard houses still line northern Benefit Street and side streets such as George and Thomas. Similar dwellings were also built at the southern end of Benefit and along Williams, John, Arnold, and Transit Streets. A number of the town's wealthiest merchants built large, elaborate dwellings during the 1790s and early 1800s, and several remain today on College Hill. The earliest of these, John Brown's House (1786), was described by John Quincy Adams as "the most magnificent and elegant private

mansion that I have ever seen on this continent." Brown was joined by others along or just off Benefit Street — including Joseph Nightingale (1792) and Sullivan Dorr (1809) — while others such as George Benson (1796) and Thomas Lloyd Halsey (ca. 1800) built even farther up the hill on or near Prospect Street. New churches from these years included two designed by John Holden Greene: St. John's Episcopal Church (now the cathedral) and the First Unitarian Church.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, College Hill continued to grow, but in a far less dramatic manner than the Weybosset Side, as the area west of the river was called. During the 1820s, the Weybosset Side surpassed College Hill in population and expanded rapidly. The new houses on College Hill during this period were often ample and sophisticated, maintaining the scale, materials, and character of earlier dwellings. Housing development continued up the hill from North and South Main and Benefit

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Streets, extending by mid-century about as far east as the Brown campus. The only significant concentration of buildings east of Brown on College Hill was a group of large, expensive houses along Cooke and Hope Streets. Institutional growth included the construction of several new churches; the Athenaeum (1839), a private library; the Rhode Island Historical Society Cabinet (1844); and the Friends' School (1819) and Dexter Asylum (1822), both located on open tracts just east of Hope Street. The area around Market Square remained an important business center, but had already begun to lose its preeminence. The North Main Street area became a center for jewelry and other metal trades. Seril and Nehemiah Dodge had developed a precious-metal plating process on Thomas Street in the 1790s, and by 1830 thirty manufacturers operated shops along North Main, including the Gorham Manufacturing Company. Base-metal operations included Congdon & Carpenter (1791) on Steeple Street and Brown & Sharpe (1833) on South Main Street.

During and after the Civil War, the land north and east of Brown University was gradually developed. Areas closer to the city's center had already been settled, and significant late nineteenth-century residential development occurred along Prospect and Hope Streets and the east-west streets connecting them. The Hope Reservoir (on the site of Hope High School) was completed in 1875 as part of the city's water-supply system, and it undoubtedly provided pleasant views for the houses built around its perimeter. During the 1880s and 1890s, a fine group of dwellings was built just south of the Dexter Asylum on Stimson Avenue and Diman Place. Along with the Cooke Street area just to the south, this is one of the finest, most intact, late nineteenth-century residential areas in Providence. By the turn of the century, College Hill was filling with middle- and upper-income housing to become one of the city's most culturally homogenous neighborhoods. While foreign immigration inundated other neighborhoods during these years, College Hill remained a predominantly Yankee bastion save for a small black community long centered on Meeting Street.

During the twentieth century, College Hill has struggled to accommodate continued physical growth and to reverse the decay of its oldest section. New residential construction was largely limited to spot development for most of the first half of the century, and many of the older houses were

divided into flats. Commercial strips have developed in several pockets throughout the neighborhood. Institutions have continued to grow, often increasing rapidly.

Brown University had grown slowly but steadily through the nineteenth century, filling its campus bounded by Prospect, Waterman, Thayer, and George Streets. In the 1890s, development of Pembroke College, a women's companion school to Brown, began a second campus, bounded by Bowen, Thayer, Meeting, and Brown Streets. During the twentieth century — and particularly after World War II — Brown expansion penetrated surrounding residential areas. In the early 1950s, nearly a hundred houses were moved or demolished to make way for the construction of two residential quadrangles. The creation of a medical program at Brown has further increased the need for large, new facilities.

Rhode Island School of Design first occupied its Waterman Street building in 1892 and steadily enlarged its campus to cover three large blocks in addition to scattered individual buildings.

Equally as dramatic as the growth of College Hill institutions has been the decline and rediscovery of historic houses along Benefit Street. Often subdivided into tenements and lacking adequate facilities, these dilapidated houses were targeted for urban renewal. A demonstration study of historic-area renewal, *College Hill*, was published in 1959 by the City Plan Commission in cooperation with the Providence Preservation Society and the Federal Urban Renewal Administration. This landmark study provided planning recommendations for preserving this historic area, and since then, nearly every building on or near Benefit Street has been thoroughly renovated, as have historic commercial buildings along the waterfront.

College Hill today is an attractive, dynamic area. The extraordinary revitalization of historic College Hill has brought national attention both for the importance of the area's history and architecture and for its historic preservation success.

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Providence's central business district is a compact cluster of commercial buildings at the heart of the city. Most of the structures here were erected between 1830 and 1930, when Providence became a regionally important commercial center. Situated in a low-lying plain — much of it filled land — which fronts on the Providence River, Downtown is surrounded by hills on the east, north, and west; construction of railroad tracks and Interstate Highways 95 and 195 has reinforced its natural boundaries. This area is further distinguished from adjacent neighborhoods by its distinct buildings and their functions.

The area now occupied by Downtown was first used by early settlers for grazing livestock. The land was low and marshy, traversed by several ponds flowing into the Great Salt Cove to the north and the Providence River to the east. Its eastern end was dominated by the large, steep Weybosset Hill. The area became more accessible when a permanent bridge to Market Square was constructed in 1711, and Weybosset Hill was leveled beginning in 1724 as its clay was used for brickmaking. The Weybosset Side, as it was then known, remained sparsely settled, however, for the first half of the eighteenth century.

The most important impetus to settlement came in 1746 when a group of religious dissidents from the Moshassuck Side, as College Hill was then known, established a new meeting house on the Weybosset Side at the present site of Beneficent Congregational Church. The Reverend Joseph Snow, Jr. was pastor of the church until 1793, and he was also instrumental in real estate development along the newly created Westminster Street. Residential construction filled much of today's Downtown in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and by the 1820s the number of residents on the Weybosset Side surpassed that on the Moshassuck Side for the first time. Later development has replaced most traces of this neighborhood's early history. Only a few houses remain, but several churches recall the area's early domestic use: Beneficent Congregational Church, Grace Episcopal Church, Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Cathedral (originally a parish church), Second Universalist Church, and Mathewson Street Methodist Church.

Providence became the state's leading commercial center following the Revolutionary War. In the late eighteenth century, this activity was located at Market Square, a central

location for the many wharves on the east side of the Providence River. While shipyards had existed on the west side of the river since the early eighteenth century, the first commercial wharf was not built on the west side until 1792. Other wharves and shops followed, and after a fire destroyed thirty-seven buildings on South Main Street in 1801, some businesses rebuilt on the west side of the river in the vicinity of Turks Head.

The transformation of Downtown from a neighborhood of houses, churches, shops, and wharves into a regional business and shopping center was at first a gradual process. The steep hill to the east militated against commercial development in that direction. The area that became Downtown did so originally because of accessibility. However, nineteenth-century changes in Rhode Island's economic base dramatically increased the rate and scale of Downtown commercial development, and made the area the transportation, commercial, retail, and civic focus of a rapidly expanding hinterland.

Transportation modes changed significantly around mid-century. The railroad, a crucial step in Providence's growth; was established here in the mid-1830s. The first Union Station, linking the various lines into one, central meeting point, was completed in 1848. The rails of six companies met at the station, situated on the north side of Downtown, where the Cove had been partially filled and contained within an elliptical basin. In front of the station was an open space known as Exchange Place and lined with major buildings on its southern edge; this became the civic center of Providence when City Hall was constructed at its western edge between 1874 and 1878. The coming of the streetcar in the mid-1860s further reinforced Downtown's importance as a transportation node, for the lines radiated out from this area.

The terrific expansion of Rhode Island manufacturing after 1850 required and supported a comparable expansion in financial and mercantile services. The area between Exchange Place and Turks Head was taken over by banks, insurance companies, and business and professional offices during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, and by 1900 the Turks Head area was firmly established as the region's financial district with Rhode Island's first skyscrapers.

The emergence of a distinct retail district began with the prosperous years during and after the Civil War, when shops

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moved steadily west from Market Square and Turks Head, occupying and eventually replacing the early houses. The increasing scale of retail operations encouraged construction of new stores west of Dorrance Street along Washington, Westminster, and Weybosset Streets after 1860. Retailing efforts included the small, specialized shop, typical of well-established merchandizing techniques, as well as a new form, the department store, which exploited economies of scale achievable in a metropolitan center to offer a complete range of goods to the buying public.

In addition to finance and retailing, Downtown provided a center for a variety of other services reinforcing its emergence as a civic center. The newspaper, telephone company, public library, and government agencies erected substantial buildings here. Hotels proliferated, and theatres grew increasingly larger and more ornate. A new Union Station, completed on land created by filling the Cove in 1898, maintained Downtown's role as an interstate transportation center, and in 1914 all local trolley routes were reorganized to begin and end at the Exchange Place trolley shelter, just in front of Union Station.

The state and the region began to suffer economically by the late 1920s, and the net effect was a thirty-year hiatus in new commercial construction. The last major buildings erected Downtown until recent years were the Biltmore Hotel (1922), Loew's State Theatre (1928), Industrial Trust Company Building (1928), and the Providence Journal Building (1934).

Recent development has left Downtown remarkably little altered. During the 1960s and 1970s, urban renewal made Westminster Street into a pedestrian mall and replaced the heavily blighted old houses and small commercial buildings in the west part of Downtown with new office and apartment buildings. New private ventures included several high-rise towers, including Hospital Trust Tower (1973) and Fleet Center (1984). A major activity in the 1970s and 1980s has been the rehabilitation of historic buildings, including the Arcade, City Hall, and the Providence Journal Building of 1906.

While Downtown may not enjoy the full degree of its vitality at the turn of the century, progress in revitalizing the area has begun to follow in the wake of increasing awareness of the value of Downtown's extraordinary collection of historic commercial buildings. Still the state's commercial center, Downtown today is both thriving and well preserved, striking a dynamic balance between change and conservation.

ELMWOOD

Elmwood, bordered by Elmwood Avenue, Broad Street, and Interstate Highway 95, is a neighborhood of ample one- and two-family houses built principally between 1865 and 1910. During this period, this thinly populated district on Cranston's northern periphery was annexed to Providence and transformed into one of the city's most fashionable neighborhoods. Elmwood still possesses pleasant, tree-lined streets and architecturally noteworthy houses, though many are dilapidated and most have been divided into apartments. Elmwood Avenue and Broad Street, once fine residential boulevards, are heavily traveled commercial strips today.

Before the middle of the nineteenth century, the Elmwood area was a rural district whose dry and sandy soil supported a few farms and country seats. Land-related businesses including a silkworm farm and several nurseries selling fruit and ornamental trees and shrubs began to appear in the 1830s. Two cemeteries were established in northern Elmwood: Grace Church Cemetery (1834) and Locust Grove Cemetery (1848). With its large, old trees, superintendent's lodge, and fine funerary monuments, Grace Church Cemetery remains one of Elmwood's foremost visual assets. Trinity United Methodist Church, a fine example of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture, was erected on Elmwood Avenue across from the cemetery in 1864-65, and the intersection of Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue was renamed Trinity Square in its honor in 1875.

Platting of house lots began as early as 1801 when forty-foot-wide lots were sold on Peace and Plenty Streets, and by the 1850s subdivision of remaining farms was in full swing though few houses had yet been built. Much of the present character and layout of the neighborhood is the result of the efforts of Joseph Jesse Cooke who acquired land bordered by Elmwood, Congress, and Adelaide Avenues and Hamilton Street in 1843. Cooke named his new residence "Elmwood," a designation which spread to the entire region, and he collaborated with other landowners in the area to establish a model suburb with wide, tree-lined streets. Unlike most developers whose sole concern was the sale of individual lots, Cooke attempted to create a homogenous middle-class neighborhood by issuing conditional land-deeds which specified the minimum cost for any house erected, required construction on the lot within five years of purchase, and prescribed front yard requirements. In addition, Cooke ex-

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tended Elmwood Avenue from its intersection with Reservoir Avenue to Roger Williams Park between 1857 and 1872 as a fashionable residential boulevard. In spite of Cooke's and other developers' efforts, settlement in Elmwood was slow.

Instead, land in the largely empty southern part of Elmwood was devoted to recreation. Adelaide Grove, extending south and west from the corner of Adelaide Avenue and Melrose Street was a popular picnic spot during the 1870s and 1880s. In 1878, a thirty-acre tract bounded by Broad, Sumter, Niagara, and Sackett Streets was transformed into Park Garden, a summer amusement park landscaped with lawns, gardens, lakes, and paths dotted with Japanese style pavilions. In the 1890s, it was platted into house lots and sold, although a part survived as Adelaide Park until about 1905. An Adelaide Park baseball field served as the home of the Providence Grays National League baseball team until they moved to Melrose Park, located on the south side of Thackery Street west of Melrose Street.

The lowlands south of Sackett Street between Niagara Street and Elmwood Avenue served as the site of the annual visit of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus from the late nineteenth century until the 1940s.

During the last quarter of the century, Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue were built up, and development of the northern side streets was completed by 1910. In the southern part, the remoteness of the area and J.J. Cooke's high prices and stringent deed restrictions impeded settlement, and no more than two dozen houses were built before his death in 1881. Under the management of Cooke's less demanding heirs, however, building activity increased. By 1900 much of the area from Congress to Lenox Avenues was built up. Distinguished residential architecture of the 1880s and 1890s may be found throughout the Elmwood neighborhood, and particularly along Parkis and Princeton Avenues and Whitmarsh and Moore Streets in the north and on Adelaide and Ontario in the south, where large houses were erected for the families of business leaders. In addition, a number of two-family houses were built at this time, many decked out in the latest architectural finery. Less elaborate two-family houses rose more commonly in the eastern sections of Elmwood near Broad Street.

During the early twentieth century, remaining vacant land in Elmwood was divided into small lots and filled by con-

struction of relatively modest one- or two-family dwellings and a few three-deckers. Another housing alternative was the apartment house. The Whitmarsh (86 Whitmarsh Street) was built in 1913, and by the 1930s a dozen apartment complexes existed in the neighborhood.

Commercial development was ancillary to residential growth for most of Elmwood's history. In the early years of the twentieth century, automobile-related businesses flourished along Elmwood Avenue, which was widened to accommodate more traffic in 1936, and in 1938 its canopy of elm trees was removed. Some of the avenue's large houses were demolished for commercial buildings or parking lots, and others were recycled as funeral homes or apartment buildings. By 1940, Elmwood Avenue looked much as it does today.

During the 1920s and 1930s the neighborhood's population density increased as all vacant land was filled, large houses were subdivided, and apartment construction continued. Wealthy and middle-income residents, for whom earlier development was intended, generally remained in Elmwood in spite of changes to the neighborhood's suburban character. However, the children of long-time residents frequently settled elsewhere, and the neighborhood's population slowly changed. Until after World War II, the area received relatively few of Providence's immigrant population, although the number of German residents was sufficient to form a social and musical society, Providence Turnverein, and to maintain a clubhouse from 1890 until World War I. Second-generation Irish and Russian-Jewish immigrants moved into Elmwood during the early years of the twentieth century. A number of Swedish and black residents moved to Elmwood during the 1960s and 1970s after their homes in South Providence were demolished as part of urban renewal projects.

Although some of the best of Elmwood's Victorian residential sections, particularly along Elmwood Avenue, have been ruined, most of the neighborhood's streets remain architecturally intact. In recent years a small but continuing trickle of individuals and families, attracted by the inherent quality of the structures and the relatively low prices of real estate, have established themselves in Elmwood, and old and new residents have banded together in several neighborhood improvement groups to renew Elmwood's potential as a pleasant residential area.

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FEDERAL HILL

Federal Hill is a densely developed residential neighborhood atop a plateau west of Downtown and south of the Woonasquatucket River Valley. To the south, Westminster Street separates Federal Hill from the West End. Atwells Avenue and Broadway form major east-west axes through the neighborhood, and the side streets form a highly irregular street pattern, the result of sporadic nineteenth-century development. The large, elaborate houses along Broadway contrast with the tenements along most of the side streets. This physical difference emphasizes the two distinct forces that shaped the neighborhood in the nineteenth century: the parallel developments of a prosperous mercantile and manufacturing class and of an expanding immigrant labor force.

Until the 1820s, Federal Hill was mostly vacant land used for grazing cattle. Westminster Street was part of the 1714 road from Providence to Plainfield, Connecticut. In 1739, a tavern was built at the intersection of Westminster and Cranston Streets, and by 1783, when Joseph Hoyle bought the property, eight houses stood nearby; none survives. Atwells Avenue was laid out from Aborn Street to the Woonasquatucket River in 1809 and extended to Manton Avenue as the Woonasquatucket Turnpike in 1810.

As Providence grew beyond the area of colonial settlement during the first half of the nineteenth century, Federal Hill became home to many of Providence's artisans and

working class: carpenters, teamsters, shopkeepers, skilled workers, and laborers, some of whom worked in factories along the Woonasquatucket River. By 1850, houses had been built along the length of Westminster Street and throughout the section east of Dean Street adjacent to Downtown; building in other areas was sparser. Only a few of these Federal and Greek Revival dwellings survive to recall the area's early urbanization.

In 1842, Federal Hill residents played a prominent role in the Dorr Rebellion. Thomas Wilson Dorr and his followers, in an effort to broaden suffrage, constituted themselves as an extralegal government and established their headquarters on Atwells Avenue. From there they unsuccessfully attacked a state arsenal on Cranston Street. Despite this aborted effort, the Dorrites ultimately saw a number of their desired reforms adopted in the new constitution of November 1842.

Federal Hill's location immediately west of Downtown made it ripe for intense development during Providence's boom years in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Federal Hill, in fact, vividly illustrates the extremes of living conditions among the city's citizens during this dynamic period. Broadway, bisecting the neighborhood, developed as one of several stylish main drags into town. The side streets and most of the area north of Broadway took on a decidedly ethnic, lower-income cast.

Beginning in the 1840s, Irish immigration began to swell the population of Federal Hill. By 1865, half the neighborhood's 8,400 residents were immigrants crowded into the area north of Atwells Avenue along the river and the railroad tracks. This sudden influx led to the establishment in 1853 of the city's third Roman Catholic parish, St. Mary's. Situated at the west end of Broadway, St. Mary's Church and School became an important neighborhood institution. Population growth was so rapid, however, that St. Mary's was unable to accommodate the area's residents, and another parish, St. John's, was created in 1870 on Atwells Avenue.

The neighborhood became easily accessible both to Downtown and to Olneyville, a rapidly industrializing node to the west, when horsecar service was inaugurated along Broadway and Westminster Street in the 1860s. Real estate developers began to subdivide the remaining open land, and their little regard for these new streets' direction or connection with other streets resulted in the neighborhood's present, random-grid street pattern. The houses built on these side streets varied in size and type, but a general continuity of scale resulted from a relative similarity of lot size and common reliance on pattern books and similar plans.

Broadway became one of Providence's more fashionable addresses in the 1850s. It enjoyed both proximity to Downtown and ample open land for the construction of large houses. Originally laid out from Sabin Street to Dean Street in the 1830s and later extended to Olneyville, Broadway was widened to eighty feet in 1854 and thus became the broadest street in the city. The first of the street's large houses was built about this time, and by century's end Broadway was lined with a distinguished procession of elaborate dwellings erected by Providence's increasingly wealthy merchants and manufacturers. Like Waterman and Angell Streets on the East Side and Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue on the south side, Broadway was a handsome and impressive thor-

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oughfare leading to the heart of the city. All Saints Episcopal Church (1847; rebuilt 1868-72) at 674 Westminster Street served this area in the middle years of the century and was augmented in 1890 by St. James's at 402 Broadway.

Immigrants from Italy began to arrive on Federal Hill in significant numbers in the 1880s. During the following two decades, the neighborhood became home to more than 9,000 Italian immigrants; in 1916, almost eighty-five per cent of Federal Hill residents were immigrants or their children. The rapid influx of new arrivals, many with minimal resources, to the already densely populated neighborhood inevitably resulted in overcrowding and deplorable housing

conditions. The Italians settled north of Atwells Avenue in the same area occupied by the Irish a half century earlier, and nearly forty per cent of the houses were occupied by four or more families. Triple deckers were erected as the economical solution to the housing shortage, and the Italian settlement grew to include most of Federal Hill.

The greater Providence community attempted to relieve some of the worst slum conditions by establishing settlement houses in the area, and the immigrants themselves were quick to form their own social and political clubs, mutual benefit societies, newspapers, and churches. This creation of a series of neighborhood-based networks was among the strongest and most extensive in the city; it quickly established and reinforced the Italian presence on Federal Hill. Two new Roman Catholic churches were added to accommodate the Italians: Holy Ghost, organized in 1889 and located at 470 Atwells Avenue in a building erected in 1901, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, formed in 1921.

Atwells Avenue became the center of the Italian commercial community in the early years of the twentieth century. An active pushcart market developed at the corner of DePasquale and Atwells Avenues, followed by more permanent establishments such as shops, markets, and banks. Merchants often built commercial blocks, like those erected by Nicolò and Antonio Cappelli near the pushcart market: with shops on the first story and flats above, these were typical of Atwells Avenue during this period.

Federal Hill retains a significant portion of its buildings from the time of its greatest growth. Splendid mansions still line Broadway, though most have been divided into apartments or converted to commercial use. And while some of the side streets off Atwells Avenue have declined somewhat,

the neighborhood in general remains a thriving urban area and Italian-American center. Atwells Avenue, in particular, has seen a resurgence of development in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The neighborhood's strong spirit of community and physical legacy are important resources for future growth.

FOX POINT

Part of Providence's earliest settled area, Fox Point is a well established and densely built up residential neighborhood. Surrounded on three sides by the water, it owes much of its development to the primary and secondary effects of maritime activity; as such, the area has a long and interesting ethnic history. Changes to the waterfront and construction of Interstate Highway 195 have erased some remnants of its history, but Fox Point retains a large proportion of historic buildings and remains home to most of the city's Portuguese citizens.

Fox Point's historic development can be traced to the seventeenth century. According to local tradition, Roger Williams first landed in Providence on the western shore of the Seekonk River near the present intersection of Williams and Gano Streets, and the land in Fox Point was part of the first settlement. Fox Point land fronting on the Providence River was included in the 1638 division of house lots, while the area east of Hope Street was set off in six-acre lots for farming and grazing. Waterfront activity later superseded farming as the town's major activity, and Providence's first wharf was erected near the foot of Transit Street about 1680.

Fox Point was indistinguishable from the rest of Providence until the 1790s, when real estate development and construction of new harbor facilities began to shape its future and form. Early streets included Power (1738) and Wickenden (1772), and by 1803 Williams, John, Arnold, Transit, and Sheldon Streets had been platted west of Hope Street. These newly created lots filled quickly during the prosperous 1790s, and houses were built throughout the neighborhood west of East Street during the first half of the nineteenth century, including more substantial residences for merchants and captains and smaller dwellings clustered in the southern and eastern sections for artisans and laborers. The area east of Governor Street was a farm owned by Governor Fenner until the late 1840s, when it was platted into the existing street grid.

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Harbor development became intense in the 1790s to accommodate large new ships employed in the Oriental trade. John Brown's wharves, warehouses, air furnace, distill house, and spermaceti works were centered at India Point near the mouth of the Seekonk River. Ropewalks were laid out east of Brook Street. Similar development and activity continued on the east side of the Providence River.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Fox Point became the city's transportation center, as facilities for packet boats, coastal freighters, and — eventually — railroads supplemented private wharves. Since the first railroads in Providence were planned as overland links to the existing maritime transport system, the Fox Point waterfront was a logical place for the Boston & Providence line's first station, completed in 1835. When a line from Providence to Stonington, Connecticut was established in 1837, its terminus was a wharf at the end of Crary Street, on the west side of the river, and passengers and freight were ferried across to India Point for travel connections.

Easy access to the region's major transportation network attracted industry to southern Fox Point during the first half of the nineteenth century. Like the ships' chandleries and ropewalks of the eighteenth century, these were related to the area's transportation network, as well as provided support for the increasingly important local textile industry. Fox Point plants included facilities for the Providence Steam Engine Company (1834) and the Fuller Iron Works (1840) on Pike Street and the Providence Tool Company (1844) on Wickenden Street. The waterfront area remained industrialized well into the twentieth century.

The history of Fox Point's development as an immigrant/ethnic neighborhood began with the establishment here in 1813 of the first Roman Catholic church in Rhode Island. The small Irish community in Fox Point increased by the 1830s as Irish laborers immigrated to work on the Blackstone Canal (1825-28) and the Boston & Providence Railroad (1831-35). After completion of the tracks and station, the Irish continued to settle here to work as waterfront or industrial laborers. By the 1840s, the waterfront section of Fox Point was known as "Corky Hill." In 1853, this Irish parish erected a more substantial church, St. Joseph's, at 86 Hope Street. By 1865, half of the neighborhood was foreign born, and ten years later the ratio had grown to three-fifths. Older houses in the area became overcrowded, and new slums developed along streets near the water.

Between 1876 and 1880, a 400-acre area south of Wickenden Street was condemned as part of a city plan for regrading, highway adjustment, and slum clearance. Nearly 150 buildings were demolished or moved, Foxes Hill was leveled, and most of the material excavated was used on the western shore of the Seekonk River for fill; Gano Street was built on the new land.

Throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century, new houses were built east of Hope Street on the former Fenner Farm or on the new land extending to Gano Street. These dwellings were primarily two-, three-, or four-family tenements, and toward the end of the century more than one house per lot was not uncommon. Many of these houses were owned or rented by Irish immigrants or their children.

A second wave of immigration began about 1870, when Portuguese and Cape Verdeans fled poor conditions in their homelands. As early as the 1840s, Portuguese sailors occasionally had shipped aboard Yankee whalers which routinely called at the Azores or Cape Verde Islands; some of these established the nucleus of a Portuguese community in Fox Point. During the late nineteenth century, nearly two thousand Portuguese immigrants settled in Fox Point, mainly in inexpensive rented quarters. Like the Irish before them, most Portuguese worked as unskilled laborers in factories or on the docks. Primarily Roman Catholic, the Portuguese families attended St. Joseph's Church until the formation of Our Lady of the Rosary in 1885. The present edifice, completed in 1906, remains a religious and cultural focus of the neighborhood. Federal immigration laws adopted in 1924 sharply reduced the number of Portuguese immigrants arriving in Providence, but since the relaxation of these laws in 1965, approximately 10,000 Portuguese have arrived in southern New England.

Physical changes to the neighborhood have been substantial in the twentieth century. Since the 1940s, the waterfront has been abandoned and is now India Point Park. Construction of Interstate Highway 195 cleared a wide swath through the southern part of Fox Point. Urban renewal clearance and redevelopment projects have transformed the South Main Street area, as has restoration of historic houses west of Hope Street.

While Fox Point's relationship with the water has been obscured by recent development, much of the neighborhood remains intact to tell a large portion of its particular history:

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the early development just east of Benefit Street, followed by several waves of immigrants who filled the eastern part of Fox Point and continue to provide an ethnic flavor to this important, historic area.

THE JEWELRY DISTRICT

The Jewelry District is a small but intact fragment of a once-larger manufacturing center. Now physically distinct because of construction of Interstate Highways 95 and 195, the Jewelry District is immediately south of Downtown and just north of the waterfront. Formerly a residential neighborhood, the district was converted to industrial use beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century; today it is exclusively commercial and industrial in use, dominated by large manufacturing buildings and parking lots.

The first dwellings were erected here in the early nineteenth century, and a few houses — like the Samuel Lewis House at 137 Chestnut Street — survive from that era. By 1875, this was a densely built residential neighborhood, and industry had already begun to arrive in the area. The Providence Steam Mill (1827) and the Phenix Iron Foundry (1830 et seq.) were located between Dyer and Eddy Streets and the Providence River. The Phenix Iron Foundry had built a machine shop at the corner of Elm and Butler (now Imperial Place) Streets in 1848. The Barstow Stove Company was headquartered at 118 Point Street, its home since 1849. These industries, however, represented something of a spill-over from the much more heavily industrialized area to the north between Pine and Ship Streets east of Richmond Street.

During the 1880s, two large new plants that would grow considerably during the early twentieth century were built. The Davol Rubber Company moved into new quarters at 69 Point Street in 1884 and gradually expanded to fill two corners of the intersection of Point and Eddy Streets. Narragansett Electric Company moved into a large new plant at South and Eddy Streets in 1889.

The jewelry industry had been established in Providence toward the end of the eighteenth century, and its center remained along North Main Street near Thomas Street for much of the nineteenth century. The industry grew sporadically before the Civil War but expanded terrifically during

the last quarter of the century. By 1880, Providence led the country in jewelry production, and the cramped quarters on North Main Street were no longer able to accommodate these firms. Between about 1890 and 1910, a number of jewelry firms relocated in this area south of Friendship Street.

The new industrial buildings erected for these firms were designed specifically for their use. Despite the growth of production, jewelry manufacturing did not realize an economy of scale, and individual operations remained small. Buildings like the Champlin Building (1888) at 116 Chestnut, the Russell Building (1904) at 95 Chestnut, and the Doran Building (1907) at 150 Chestnut Street were multiple-story buildings housing one or more tenants to a floor. In contrast to other industrial areas, the jewelry district developed late, quickly, and in a previously established residential neighborhood.

Several larger plants were built here in the early years of the twentieth century. Two of them, the Doran-Speidel Building (1912) at 70 Ship Street and the Coro Building (1929) at 167 Point Street are reinforced-concrete structures.

The Jewelry District's present stock of buildings was standing by the mid-1930s. Manufacturing was by then clearly the dominant activity in this area, and the old houses were gradually razed or moved to create parking lots.

In recent years, the interstate highways have set the district off from surrounding neighborhoods. The once-dense industrial area north of Route 195 has almost completely disappeared, replaced by parking lots and the state judicial complex. Most buildings in the Jewelry District are still in light industrial and commercial use, particularly since jewelry remains an important part of Providence's industrial scene.

Several buildings have been recycled. The Champlin Building is now commercial/residential condominiums. The large Davol Rubber Company has been converted into Davol Square, a combination of commercial and retail use.

The compactness of this area, its proximity to major highways, and the changes already made suggest that this area may well undergo yet another major transformation at the end of the twentieth century, much as it did a hundred years ago.

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THE MOSHASSUCK AND
WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER VALLEYS

The Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket River Valley system has been the site of industrial activity from the seventeenth century to the present. While this natural system and its environs do not properly constitute a neighborhood in the usual sense, the whole shares a common history as the city's industrial corridor, particularly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This development played an important part in the general history of Providence and to a great extent effected the growth of adjacent areas.

The water-power potential of the Moshassuck River was realized early in Providence's history when John Smith built a gristmill and tannery in 1646 at the falls near the intersection of Charles and Mill Streets, adjacent to the early settlement. Destroyed when Providence was burned during King Philip's War in 1676, the gristmill and tannery were rebuilt together with a sawmill and iron works. These fledgling industries remained in operation here for many decades.

Settlement along the Woonasquatucket River began as a series of small agricultural villages. About 1700, John Tripp, a farmer, settled at what is now the western edge of Providence; known today as Manton, Triptown became an early, permanent farming settlement. By the mid-1740s, the Ruttenburg family had settled farther east on the river, just south of Atwells Avenue, and established a paper mill and distillery; Valley Street was opened to connect this settlement with the Plainfield Road to the south. The most prominent settlement was Olneyville, near the junction of the Plainfield Road (Westminster and Plainfield Streets) and the river. A number of farms occupied Olneyville's immediate hinterland, but the village had several industries by the time of the Revolution: a paper mill, a gristmill, a forge, a foundry, and a chocolate factory. Only a scattered handful of heavily altered eighteenth-century structures — several moved from their unknown original locations — survive from this early development.

During the early years of industrialization, the rivers were critical both for power and for the water supplied in textile processing. Early mills thus grew up along the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers. At first they were situated in or near existing settlements but soon established new locations. The first textile mill on the Woonasquatucket was the Union Cotton Mill of 1805, just west of Olneyville. The

Merino Mill of 1812 was almost a mile west of Olneyville, on Ponagansett Avenue. The Manton Mill of 1827 was in the heart of Triptown. The Dyerville Mill at 610 Manton Avenue was built across the river from the Merino Mill in a largely vacant quarter; as usual for most isolated mills, the company built workers' housing nearby. Early industries along the Moshassuck included the Allen Printworks of 1830 on Dryden Lane and the Fletcher Manufacturing Company of 1844 on Charles Street, near the site of the original gristmill. Both of these were near the town's original settlement.

Industrial development intensified along the rivers around mid-century partly in response to improved transportation facilities and technological innovations. Between 1824 and 1828, the Moshassuck River was incorporated into the Blackstone Canal, a transportation facility connecting Providence with Worcester, Massachusetts. More importantly, railroad lines were constructed during the 1840s paralleling the Woonasquatucket River from Olneyville into the center of Providence and then turning north along the canal. These railroad lines facilitated the delivery of raw materials and the shipment of finished goods, reinforcing the role of the river valleys as an industrial corridor through the city. In addition, the steam-power technology fundamental to railroad development was adapted for factory use. Mills were thus liberated from dependence on water for power and enjoyed greater freedom of location, denser construction, and significant increases in the scale of production.

Valley Street north and east of Olneyville became a prime location for mill construction following the coming of the railroad. Seven textile mills or finishing plants located here between the 1840s and 1860s, including the Valley Worsted Mills (1842), Providence Dyeing, Bleaching & Calendering (1846), and Woonasquatucket Print Works (1848). Two extensive wool-manufacturing complexes were built in Olneyville just west of Manton Avenue: the Atlantic Mills (1851, 1863 et seq.), which became the largest textile operation in Providence by the 1880s, and the Riverside Mills (1863, 1865, et seq.), just west on Aleppo Street.

Base-metal and machine-tool industries developed here at first to service the growing textile industry, and these factories often located in Providence's industrial corridor. The Eagle Screw Company (1838) and the New England Screw Company (1840) merged to form the American Screw Com-

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pany in 1860; American Screw's complex at 530 North Main Street was one of the three largest factory complexes in the country. The Corliss Steam Engine Company built a new plant at 146 West River Street, just east of the railroad tracks, about 1850. Three nationally important firms located at the eastern end of the Woonasquatucket River during the second half of the nineteenth century: Burnside Rifle Works (1862), reorganized as Rhode Island Locomotive Works (1865), located at the corner of Valley and Hemlock; Nicholson File Company (1864), on Acorn Street, just north of the railroad; and Brown & Sharpe (1870) at 235 Promenade Street. These firms were among the nation's industrial giants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their plants expanded rapidly to cover acres along the rivers and significantly changed the area into a dense, industrial belt. By 1900, the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers were heavily industrial from Ponagansett Avenue on the west, through the central part of the city, to Branch Avenue on the north.

Housing for factory workers was constructed throughout the nineteenth century along the rivers as well as in the adjacent neighborhoods of Mount Pleasant, Federal Hill, Smith Hill, the North End, and Mount Hope. With several exceptions, housing was provided by real estate speculators rather than the workers' employers. Olneyville, the most heavily industrialized section of the city, has a large concentration of workers' housing. The growth of the streetcar lines in the late nineteenth century allowed workers to live beyond walking distance to factories, and speculative housing for workers grew up along and off Manton, Atwells, and Hartford Avenues.

This dense, urban, industrial corridor reached its peak in the 1920s. As Providence's industrial base weakened following World War II, many of these large plants closed completely or moved operations elsewhere. The construction of the Route 6 connector in Olneyville, Interstate Highway 95, and the West River Industrial Park redevelopment project claimed a number of these structures.

The Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck rivers attracted industry from the time of settlement, for water provided processing, power, and transportation. During the nineteenth century, the river valleys became the most heavily industrialized part of the city. Many of these mill complexes remain; most are now underutilized, but the transportation network function of this corridor remains as the major railroad and highway links of the city.

MOUNT HOPE

Situated along the steep eastern ridge of the Moshassuck River Valley, Mount Hope is a primarily residential neighborhood of one- and two-family dwellings built during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth. Its major north-south axes, North Main and Hope Streets, parallel the crest of the ridge, and Hope Street, in fact, sits atop this crest. Secondary streets cross these axes at regular intervals and create the basic grid pattern of the street system. Between North Main and Camp Streets south of Rochambeau Avenue, most houses are simple, mid-nineteenth-century cottages or later, larger, and more elaborate one- and two-family houses. Buildings located east of Camp Street and north of Rochambeau Avenue generally date from the late nineteenth or twentieth century, and single-family houses predominate.

Originally an agricultural adjunct to Providence, Mount Hope was first settled during the seventeenth century, but development remained sparse through the 1850s. The area lies just north of College Hill, and North Main Street is an extension of the original Towne Street north to Pawtucket. The first residents in Mount Hope were farmers and tavern-keepers who lived along the Pawtucket road. The Jeremiah Dexter Farmhouse (1754), at the corner of North Main Street and Rochambeau Avenue (also an early road), is the only building in the neighborhood surviving from the colonial period. Across the road from the Dexter House is the North Burial Ground, established in 1700 for a "burying ground, militia training ground, and other public purposes" and now used exclusively as a cemetery.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, houses were built along the western end of Olney Street, Bacon Street (now occupied by University Heights Shopping Center), Jenkins Street, Pleasant Street, Abbott Street, and North Main Street. Many of these houses, like that still standing at 43 Abbott Street, were simple clapboard cottages with center chimneys. This area of settlement in the southern portion of Mount Hope has traditionally been occupied by black residents and was the site of the Olney Street race riot in 1831.

Only a handful of houses had been constructed in the remainder of Mount Hope by as late as 1857. Arable land

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remained in cultivation, as on the farm of Luther Salisbury, whose farmhouse (ca. 1849) and stable survive at 50 Forest Street. Nearby, several suburban retreats were built for merchants and manufacturers near the eastern end of Cypress Street; two of these remain at 156 and 176 Cypress Street.

Large-scale development did not occur in Mount Hope until the second half of the nineteenth century because of the area's remoteness and lack of public transportation. In 1765, the vacant area north of Rochambeau Avenue was included in the Town of North Providence; in 1874, this still-vacant area was reannexed to Providence. At that time, the only densely settled part of Mount Hope was along North Main Street. The industrialization of the Moshassuck River corridor provided jobs for skilled and unskilled workers. The population of the First Ward, which included Mount Hope and the eastern end of Smith Hill, was swollen by Irish immigration around mid-century; in 1875 half of the ward's 14,000 residents were Irish immigrants or their children, and contemporary accounts describe immigrant slums in the Moshassuck River area.

Besides proximity to available work, another impetus to settlement in Mount Hope was the initiation of street railway service along North Main Street (by 1875) and Camp Street (1886). The impact of improved transportation was dramatic. New houses filled vacant lots along the street railway lines and on cross streets like Doyle Avenue. Most of these houses were one- or two-family dwellings built for middle-income families: Daniel Wallis Reeves, leader of the famous American Band, built a mansard-roof cottage at 178 Doyle Avenue in 1871. The Reeves House and others like it on Doyle Avenue and the cross streets to the north illustrate the range of types and forms of late nineteenth-century housing.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Mount Hope was a rapidly growing middle-class neighborhood located within convenient commuting distance of Downtown and near the industrial district along the Moshassuck and West Rivers. Small single-family houses in the colonial and bungalow modes were built in the blocks bordering both sides of Hope Street along streets like Langham Road, Mount Hope Avenue, and Eighth Street. Larger two-family houses and triple-deckers were also built in many parts of the neighborhood. An early example of tract housing in Providence was the Gilbane Company development of Catalpa Road between 1902 and 1904. Providence

architects Murphy & Hindle designed the street's eleven houses using only two floor plans but avoided monotony by varying detail and siting.

Since the late nineteenth century, institutions have been a significant presence in Mount Hope. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children had a home at 108 Doyle Avenue beginning in the 1880s. The Rhode Island School for the Deaf built its headquarters at 520 Hope Street in 1892, and this complex expanded through much of the twentieth century; after the school's departure in the mid-1970s, the complex was occupied as The Providence Center for counseling. Miriam Hospital, established in the West End in the late nineteenth century, moved to its Summit Avenue site in 1952 and has since expanded considerably.

The division of large, privately held landholdings spurred twentieth-century development. In 1928, Brown University sold its ten-acre Andrews Athletic Field (bounded by Camp, Dana, Ivy, and Forest Streets). The Jeremiah Dexter Farm had been completely divided by the 1930s. Hope Street emerged as a commercial spine after World War I, and North Main Street, widened in 1931, became even more important as a commercial strip.

In addition to native-born whites, three ethnic groups have been important to twentieth-century development. Blacks, long a presence in the neighborhood, accounted for more than twenty per cent of the population by 1950. Irish immigrants were a similarly large portion of the population and built the Church of the Holy Name on Camp Street. Russian Jews first came to the area in the early 1890s, and by 1950 the area north of Rochambeau Avenue was the city's most concentrated settlement of Russian immigrants.

Since World War II, redevelopment has changed portions of Mount Hope, particularly the southern section. The University Heights complex, which replaced all trace of the neighborhood's early buildings, includes a shopping center as well as several hundred units of garden apartments. Nearby are new structures for the Olney Street Baptist Church and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School.

While the earliest buildings in Mount Hope have disappeared, the neighborhood retains much of its building stock. The houses here chronicle the evolution — at first gradual — of this agricultural adjunct to College Hill into a streetcar suburb and, ultimately, into an integral part of the larger East Side area.

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MOUNT PLEASANT AND ELMHURST

The Mount Pleasant and Elmhurst neighborhood is a largely suburban residential and institutional quarter on the northwest side of the city. One of the last areas in the city to develop, the neighborhood is dominated by medium-size dwellings set on landscaped lots. Some houses date from the late nineteenth century, but most are of twentieth-century origin. Interspersed within this residential quarter are several large institutions, each on a large piece of land.

Part of the original common land established at the beginning of settlement, this area remained farm land down through much of the nineteenth century, and development was sparse. By the 1730s, two roads had been established to bring produce from the outlying farms: the northern branch along Douglas Avenue and Eaton Street and the southern branch along Chalkstone Avenue. Unlike several of the other outlying neighborhoods used early as farmland, this area retains several of its eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century farmhouses. The Winsor-Swan-Whitman Farm stands at 416 Eaton Street. The house at 134 Sharon Street was originally at the corner of River Avenue and Whitford Street. Two other farmhouses, both built around 1800 for members of the Allen family, stand near Smith Street. Zachariah Allen's house stands in near-original condition at 1093 Smith Street, while that of his son Philip, nearby at 196 Nelson Street, has been heavily altered. Each of these farms comprised large parcels of land that remained farmed through much of the nineteenth century and open land into the twentieth.

Several roads traversed the area in the early nineteenth century. In 1815, some of the major landowners, including Philip Allen, formed the Powder Mill Turnpike Corporation. This privately owned turnpike followed Smith Street from its intersection with Eaton Street to the village of Harmony in Smithfield. The only remaining of its three tollhouses stands at 1076 Smith Street. By 1835, River, Douglas, and Chalkstone Avenues and Smith, Sharon, and Admiral Streets had been established as rural lanes connecting the various farms.

The area's handsome and open topography of wooded, rolling hills made it attractive as a site for country retreats toward the middle of the nineteenth century. More than any other part of town, Elmhurst and Mount Pleasant became the locus for such development, and several of these mid-

century country houses are still extant. William Grosvenor's Gothic Revival villa, "Elmhurst," which gave its name to the area, was the first of these; built on Smith Street in 1849, it burned in 1967. The stone, Italianate villas of William M. Bailey and Charles S. Bradley, erected in the early 1850s, stand adjacent on Eaton Street, now part of the Providence College campus. Thomas Davis's thirty-acre estate remains at the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Raymond Streets, but the imposing stone main house was demolished in 1947 for the construction of Veterans Hospital. The Eaton family's Italianate villa, "Oakwoods," occupied a large tract between

Smith and Eaton Streets from Huxley Avenue to Oakland Avenue; the house was demolished and the land divided into house lots around the turn of the century. Obadiah Brown's more modest house near the west end of Chalkstone Avenue occupied a large parcel of land, used since 1908 for municipal recreational purposes and now for Triggs Golf Course. State Education Commissioner G.W. Chapin's ample estate, "Walnut Grove," was located west of Mount Pleasant Avenue and south of Smith Street; since 1885, it has been the state home for neglected and dependent children.

Settlement remained sparse in Mount Pleasant and Elmhurst until nearly the end of the nineteenth century. Several plats of house lots were laid out in the early 1870s, but the stagnant economic climate following the Panic of 1873 no doubt quashed these development plans. Most of these early house lots were of standard, 4,000 or 5,000 square-foot size, but more elaborate houses were intended for the section south of Chalkstone and west of Academy Avenues, with lots of 20,000 to 60,000 square feet; only a few such houses were built before the land was replatted into smaller lots. Some houses rose in the neighborhood along major streets before the late 1880s, but residential development became significant only after the improvement of the economy and the advent of public transportation: streetcars traversed Chalkstone Avenue by 1882 and went out Smith Street as far as North Providence by the 1890s. By 1900, the neighborhood remained essentially a semi-rural neighborhood of comfortable dwellings occupied by middle- and upper-middle-income Yankees.

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Mount Pleasant and Elmhurst continued to develop as a middle-class residential area of primarily one- and two-family houses during the early twentieth century. In 1909, the city had acquired a continuous strip of land on either side of a stream meandering from Academy Avenue to Promenade Street and created a residential boulevard, Pleasant Valley Parkway. The parkway created a focus for development in the neighborhood, and during the following years, comfortable, well-constructed housing went up along the boulevard and its cross streets. At the same time as this residential area developed, a neighborhood commercial strip grew up along Chalkstone Avenue between River and Mount Pleasant Avenues.

The ethnic composition of the area began to change after 1900. Second- and third-generation Irish began to move into the area, away from more crowded conditions in neighborhoods like Smith Hill or South Providence. The Grosvenor Estate — since 1870 the Elmhurst Academy of the Sacred Heart — and two new Roman Catholic churches, Blessed Sacrament (1897) and St. Pius (1918), both accommodated and attracted area residents. By the mid-twentieth century, second- and third-generation Italians became a significant portion of the neighborhood's ethnic composition. The presence of a large, middle-class Roman Catholic community no doubt informed the neighborhood's twentieth-century institutional growth.

While the quiet, spacious character of Mount Pleasant made the neighborhood attractive as a location for social service and educational institutions, it was the timely availability of the large tracts of land in the form of the nineteenth-century estates that determined the neighborhood's role as an institutional center and largely shaped its physical character. The institutional boom of early twentieth century Providence was easily accommodated in the large, expensive, and outmoded nineteenth-century country houses or on their grounds.

Several hospitals located here. Charles V. Chapin Hospital was built for communicable-disease patients by the city in 1910 on a twenty-five-acre parcel from the George H. Corliss estate on Eaton Street, east of Huxley Avenue; the parcel is now part of Providence College. In 1926, the Providence Lying-In Hospital (now Women and Infants) and the Homeopathic Hospital of Rhode Island (now Roger Williams Hospital) were erected on either side of Pleasant Valley Parkway. The Saint Vincent de Paul Infant Asylum (1900)

rose on Regent Avenue on a portion of the Thomas Davis estate.

Educational institutions established themselves on spacious sites that ensured adequate room for expansion. Providence College, founded by the Dominican Order in 1917, located on a large tract adjacent to the Bradley Estate. LaSalle Academy, established Downtown on LaSalle Square in 1871, moved here in 1925 into a new building on a forty-three-acre site at Smith Street and Academy Avenue. Rhode Island College, established in 1854 as the State Normal School, relocated from Smith Hill to a site just west of the Children's Center ("Walnut Grove") in 1958.

Mount Pleasant and Elmhurst saw continued suburban development in the years following World War II as one of the few areas in Providence with yet-undeveloped land. These small and middling houses on landscaped lots in the northwestern part of the area follow the tradition of the earlier twentieth-century development. The area's transformation from rural to suburban has been relatively rapid, but this change has been neither complete nor unmindful of the neighborhood's history.

THE NORTH END

Lying between Admiral Street on the south and the railroad tracks on the east, the North End spreads across two prominent hills and an intervening valley. This valley, in the north central part of the neighborhood, is known as Wanskuck, derived from an Indian word meaning "lowlands," and this name has often been used to encompass the whole neighborhood. Streets radiating from central Providence passing through the area include Douglas Avenue, Charles Street, and Silver Spring Street; Route 146, a limited-access highway, bisects the North End. Branch Avenue is the major east-west thoroughfare, and at its intersection with Charles Street at Hopkins Square is the neighborhood's major commercial node. Wanskuck developed as a mill village in the nineteenth century, but most of the neighborhood is the product of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century suburban development.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the North End remained largely undeveloped. The oldest building here is the Esek Hopkins House (1756) on Admiral Street, at the neighborhood's southern end. The two-hundred-acre Hopkins property was farmed in the eighteenth century, and some of the rest of the land in the North End

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may have been farmed as well. The only highway in the area, the Wanskuck Road (ca. 1706), followed Branch Avenue. In 1765, this rural area was set off from Providence and included in the new Town of North Providence.

During the first half of the nineteenth century settlement remained sparse; fewer than twenty-five buildings stood in all of the North End as late as 1835. These included a small cotton mill on Wanskuck Pond and scattered dwellings.

More intensive development began in select locations after 1860. The West River, which meanders from northwest to southeast through the center of the area, and its several ponds were exploited for the production of textiles. These industrial centers stimulated North End residential and — to a lesser extent — commercial development during the second half of the century.

The largest and most important of these was the Wanskuck Company, established in 1862 when the Civil War created heavy demand for woolens. The company located on Branch Avenue just below Wanskuck Pond and produced over a quarter of a million yards of cloth its first year. The company first expanded in 1869 and became one of the country's first worsted manufacturers. In addition to the mill, the company erected twenty-five residences, mostly double houses, south of Branch Avenue to house its 350 workers. The company had little choice but to provide housing in this rural and generally inaccessible area. Further, many stages in woolen production required skilled workers, and the company needed to lure craftsmen from England. Irish immigrants supplied much of the unskilled labor at first, and they were joined later in the century by French Canadians. As long as the company continued to grow and prosper, the village grew: later structures include a company store, a workers' hall, a Baptist church, the mill owner's house (now Wanskuck Park), a mill superintendent's house, overseers' houses, and additional housing for company employees along Woodward Road and adjacent side streets built from the 1870s through the 1920s.

The second major textile manufacturer to locate in the North End was the Silver Spring Bleaching and Dyeing Company, formed in 1864 on the site of Frieze & Dow's earlier bleachery. Frieze & Dow had gained a reputation for the extraordinary whiteness of their bleached goods, due to the clear water produced by a spring on the property and by the West River. The Silver Spring textile-finishing operation increased in size and production throughout the century and employed over five hundred workers by 1897. Like most

factories in Providence, the Silver Spring Company did not provide housing for its workers, who bought or rented houses built by real estate speculators.

By the 1870s, Charles Street, Branch Avenue, and Douglas Avenue had begun to fill with small, plain, one- and two-family dwellings. The neighborhood's residents represented a diversity of ethnic backgrounds: one-fifth Americans, one-half Irish, one-seventh English, and a scattering of Scots, Germans, Canadians, and others. The Town of North Providence, still predominantly rural, agrarian, and Republican, felt threatened by this new element and, to gain control of town government, ceded the North End back to the City of Providence in 1874.

Immigrants from Italy began to arrive in the North End during the 1880s, and by 1910 this group numbered nearly four thousand. The Reverend Anthony Bove, a prominent figure in the Italian-American community, organized St. Ann's parish in 1895, and in 1910 the church building was completed on Hopkins Square.

Residential development in the North End was stimulated by the extension of trolley lines into the neighborhood along Branch Avenue in 1895 and Douglas Avenue, Charles Street, and Silver Spring Street in 1908. For the first time, vacant lands along these thoroughfares were accessible for residential development for lower- and middle-income workers employed throughout the city. This marked the beginning of a period of housing construction that transformed the neighborhood from an isolated industrial district into a densely settled suburb.

By the turn of the century, the neighborhood consisted generally of small one- or two-family dwellings and pockets of triple-deckers. By 1917, most of the vacant land had at least been platted into the present street pattern. The increased private ownership of automobiles after World War I encouraged further development in this once isolated quarter, and the remaining lots filled first with bungalows and later with Cape Cod, ranch, and split-level houses. Lots on the steep hillsides east of Charles Street were among the last to fill.

Commercial development followed the area's residential growth. By 1900, Hopkins Square had become the civic and commercial center of this neighborhood. Not only were most of the area's shops located in this square, but the library and Y.M.C.A. were nearby as well.

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During the mid-twentieth century, the neighborhood's major industries closed: Silver Spring Bleachery in 1939 and the Wanskuck Company in 1957. Two new, limited-access highways were built: Route 146 in the center of the neighborhood and Interstate Highway 95 on its eastern edge — both through what had been relatively undeveloped land. Despite these changes, the North End remains a stable suburban neighborhood.

SILVER LAKE

Silver Lake is a densely built, turn-of-the-century residential neighborhood on the west side of the city. Far removed from the early settlement of Providence, this remained part of a larger agricultural district into the nineteenth century. Suburban development before 1900 was slow, but pressure from nearby Olneyville and the opening of streetcar lines gave it impetus to grow in the early years of this century.

Settlement in the area took place in the early years of the eighteenth century. The road to Plainfield, Connecticut — now Plainfield Street — was established by 1710, and several families established farms here soon after. The earliest of these was the King Farm, whose house (ca. 1720) stood at the foot of Neutaconkanut Hill on Plainfield Street until 1955. Only the Alverson House (569 Plainfield Street) and the Plain Farm House (108 Webster Avenue) remain of the early farmhouses, and both of these date toward the end of the eighteenth century or beginning of the nineteenth century.

These farms supplied the compact part of Providence, but the area was sufficiently removed to allow separatist sentiments among its residents. Their inability to participate fully in town affairs led to the separation of the area as part of the Town of Johnston in 1759. This action ensured the agrarian character of the area for the next century and set the course for the area's physical development.

The village of Olneyville, at the northeast corner of Silver Lake, grew continuously from its establishment in the mid-eighteenth century. As industries grew along the river, the hills to the west of the village — the northeast corner of Silver Lake — were gradually developed as part of Olneyville's residential quarter. A number of small, mid-century cottages remain here, such as the house at 8 Gifford Street. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, streets such as Laban and Whittier were gradually extended and developed westward to Laurel Hill Avenue. The development of this area was thus a natural extension of growth at Olneyville.

The development of the greater part of the neighborhood to the west of Olneyville was first attempted in the mid-nineteenth century, but these early subdivisions of earlier farms met with very limited success, largely because of the area's remoteness. By 1853, the Plain Farm — bounded by Plainfield, Terrace, Hillwood, and Whitehall Streets — had been platted into the current street grid, but the streets themselves had not been built. Pocasset Avenue was one of the earliest of these to open, about 1855. Directly to the west, the farm bounded by Plainfield, Farmington, Pocasset, and Laurel Hill was platted for development in 1859. At the center of this was Silver Lake, a handsome pond intended as the focal point of a garden suburb with concentric roads circling the basin; as planned, this was one of the more sophisticated suburban plans designed to date, but the scheme was never realized and the pond was filled — only the name remains.

Significant development began to occur in Silver Lake in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, concurrent with improved transportation. The Plainfield Street trolley line was in operation by 1882. By the turn of the century, additional lines provided service along Union and Hartford Avenues, making all portions of the area more or less equally accessible to mass transit.

By 1900, the course of Silver Lake's development was set. The steadily increasing population of the nineteenth century had transformed the neighborhood from a rural hinterland to an urban area tied more closely to urban Providence than to rural Johnston. A re-annexation movement had existed in the area as early as the 1870s, but it was not until 1898 that the Annex, as it came to be called at this time, again became part of Providence. In 1919, Providence re-annexed about forty-five more acres from Johnston, including the parklands on Neutaconkanut Hill.

Building continued at a rapid pace in the early years of this century. The areas closer to Olneyville and along Hartford Avenue included more multiple-family housing, while that to the south — near Cranston — included more single-family housing. The population, expanded by large numbers of Italian immigrants, continued to grow, making Silver Lake among the most heavily Italian neighborhoods in the city.

After the intense building of the first three decades of this century, the neighborhood was largely filled. The only later additions to the neighborhood are several scattered ranch houses and the tract development built on the north slope of Neutaconkanut Hill after World War II.

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Institutional growth has kept pace with residential. Fire stations were built on Plainfield Avenue at Rye Street in the 1880s and on Laurel Hill Avenue in 1902; both have been supplanted by stations just beyond the borders of the neighborhood. Early twentieth-century schools stand on Webster Avenue at Clarence Street and at 77 Ralph Street. Two large religious complexes — both Roman Catholic — play an important role in the life of the predominantly Italian community: St. Anthony's (549 Plainfield Street) and St. Bartholomew's (297 Laurel Avenue).

The street pattern and building of Silver Lake recall the history of the area. Large eighteenth-century farms were divided in the nineteenth century by land companies into a relatively uniform street system. Early scattered suburban development in the years around and following the Civil War was supplanted toward the end of the century by more intense land use as urban pressure expanded and a growing immigrant population settled here, taking advantage of the streetcar lines. The community today remains tightly knit, and civic awareness is on the rise here, encouraged by a civic association formed in 1969 better to maintain the quality of the neighborhood.

SMITH HILL

Located on a prominent hill just north of Downtown, Smith Hill is a densely built, working-class residential neighborhood bordered on the south and east by the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers, west by Elmhurst/Mount Pleasant, and north by the West River Industrial Park and the North End. Sparsely settled before 1850, it achieved its present form between 1875 and 1925 when small cottages and larger multiple-family dwellings packed the neighborhood's primary thoroughfares and the short, irregular cross-streets in between. Today, the portion east of Interstate Highway 95 has been cleared of most nineteenth-century buildings and is the site of the Rhode Island State House and other government buildings, while the western portion still reflects the neighborhood's earlier history.

The high ground north of the Cove was first used as common land for farming and grazing. Its eastern edge was owned by John Smith who erected a grist mill on the Moshassuck River in 1638. The Smith family eventually owned a large part of eastern Smith Hill; they platted house lots in 1754, and Colonel Henry Smith built a grand mansion at the crest of the hill overlooking the Cove in 1800 (razed in 1926

for the construction of the State Office Building on Smith Street). Only a handful of farmhouses and country retreats were built in the area before the mid-nineteenth century, and of these only Esek Hopkins' house survives (1756; 97 Admiral Street).

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, today's State House lawn was a vacant hillside facing the Cove. Known as Jefferson Plain, it was the site of military reviews, picnics, and other outings. In addition, an early "work house" built near the Cove was replaced in 1845 by the State Prison, which remained in use until the present Adult Correctional Institution in Cranston opened in 1878.

Several plats of house lots were developed on Smith Hill north and west of the Cove between 1830 and 1850 which resulted in a scattering of houses (now mostly removed). Many of these were comfortable single-family dwellings built for merchants or industrial managers. More intensive development followed due to the proliferation of factories along the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck rivers after 1860 and the dramatic increase in Providence's population which resulted from mid-century immigration.

Successive waves of immigrants helped to populate Smith Hill. Although Irish immigrants settled in all parts of the city, Smith Hill became the traditional center of the Irish community with the establishment of Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church on Smith Street in 1842. During the remainder of the century the complex grew to include a rectory (1860), school (1871), convent (1872), and new church edifice (1916).

Immigration from England, Scotland, and Canada was significant on Smith Hill as well. Late in the nineteenth century newcomers included substantial numbers of Italians, Russians, and Armenians.

Each successive wave of immigrants lived in small, crowded dwellings — some mere shanties, others single-family houses converted into tenements — at the foot of the hill along the Cove and around the Randall Square area.

The demand for housing by immigrant and native workers in factories located near Smith Hill resulted in a construction boom between 1875 and 1910; by 1883 the neighborhood was the fastest growing area in the city. Many houses

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were constructed by real estate developers, but owner-occupied multiple-family dwellings were equally common. The neighborhood's most striking visual characteristic remains the seemingly endless repetition of three basic building forms constructed during the late nineteenth-century: cottages, two-family houses, and three-deckers.

In 1891 the State House Commission selected a sixteen-acre parcel at the crest of Smith Hill commanding a magnificent view of Downtown as the site of the new capitol, completed in 1904. Soon after construction began on the capitol, the old prison was demolished, and the Rhode Island Normal School was constructed (1898). The complex of state buildings has continued to grow with the addition of the State Office Building (1928) and the Cannon Health Building (1971). A master plan calls for other new buildings in the future.

By 1920 most of the land on Smith Hill was filled, the neighborhood was densely populated, and factories established at the neighborhood's edges provided employment for many area residents. Despite this seeming stability, the neighborhood has lost population continuously since the third decade of the twentieth century as the inner-city area became less appealing than suburban locations and as use of private automobiles freed commuters from reliance on public transportation. During the 1930s when many factories were closed, Smith Hill's population of predominantly industrial workers experienced the city's second highest rate of families on relief. By 1940 almost twenty percent of the dwellings on Smith Hill were vacant compared to three percent for the city at large. Even during the wartime prosperity of the 1940s, Smith Hill lost population as families earned the means to move to newer houses in less congested parts of Providence or in the suburbs. Since 1950 a number of factories in the area have closed or moved to suburban sites as well.

Government sponsored projects have significantly altered areas of Smith Hill during the last forty years. The first public housing project in Providence was Chad Brown, begun in 1941 on Admiral Street. Another government project, construction of Interstate Highway 95 in the early 1960s, necessitated demolition of some of Smith Hill's finest architecture and separated the eastern and western parts of the neighborhood.

Despite its problems, Smith Hill retains a large stock of well-built houses. Few neighborhoods in the city recall so

well as Smith Hill the large number of immigrants here between the Civil War and World War I and the concomitant building boom to house recently arrived workers. The last decade has witnessed a renewal of interest and activity in the neighborhood among residents, community, and religious organizations.

SOUTH PROVIDENCE

South Providence is an urban, inner-city, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century residential neighborhood located on the west side of the Providence River on the gently sloping plane south of Downtown Providence. Broad Street, originally an Indian path, forms the western border of South Providence, and several major east-west streets traverse the

neighborhood; the overall street pattern is an irregular grid, the product of pluralistic platting. Once densely built, the area has decayed in the twentieth century, and empty lots are now interspersed through much of the neighborhood; in some areas, whole blocks have been demolished. Housing types range from mansion to tenement, but most are modest one- or two-family dwellings and triple deckers.

Only a few buildings are known to have been built in South Providence before about 1840. The area was a rural hinterland used for farming. The David Sprague House (ca. 1840), 263 Public Street, is the only survivor from this era. Development of the neighborhood was effectively blocked by three major landholdings along its northern edge. During the eighteenth century, the area now occupied by Rhode Island Hospital was set aside as the Hospital Lands, and smallpox (1776) and yellow fever (1797) hospitals were erected. The Providence Aqueduct Company, formed about the time of the Revolution, supplied fresh water to the growing settlement Downtown from its spring on a tract near the intersection of Conduit and Stewart Streets. The West Burial Ground, established in 1785, occupied seventeen acres from Plain to Friendship Street by 1842.

In the 1830s, more intensive settlement began in South Providence, first along the harbor. Textile and metals factories located on Eddy Street where inexpensive land was available near the transportation facilities of the harbor and railroad, then terminating at the harbor on Crary Street. Slaughterhouses occupied a tract along Willard Avenue. Unskilled Irish immigrants were employed by these industries, and laborers' housing, stores, saloons, and St. Bernard's

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Roman Catholic Mission (the forerunner of St. Michael's Church) were built near Prairie and Comstock Avenues, an area which came to be known as Dogtown. To the north, subdivision and sale of the Aqueduct Company lands and closing of the West Burial Ground in the 1840s permitted westward expansion from Downtown along Pine and Friendship Streets, and this area filled with single-family dwellings.

South Providence experienced rapid development between the end of the Civil War and the turn of the century. Industry continued to locate on vacant lands fronting on the harbor along Eddy Street, and small, light industry was scattered throughout the neighborhood. South Providence's population increased rapidly as a result of the foreign immigration experienced throughout Providence. In upper South Providence, the number of native residents was equaled by the number of immigrants during most of this period, and by 1910 immigrants and their children accounted for six of every ten residents. Most newcomers were from Ireland, followed by those from Russia, Sweden, Canada, Austria, and England. Dogtown remained the center of Irish settlement in South Providence until the end of the century, when the earlier arrivals moved to newer and better housing, and Russian Jewish immigrants replaced them.

The streetcar played an important role in the settlement of South Providence. The first line, along Eddy, Public, and Ocean Streets and Thurbers Avenue, was in operation by 1875, and by 1880 others extended out Broad Street and Prairie Avenue as well. In the following decades, rental properties were built in great quantity on small lots in the areas served by streetcars. Many of these were two- or three-family frame houses set gable end to the street; such concentrations of buildings gave South Providence much of its atmosphere. Although groups of two or three similar two-family houses built by a single landlord were common, larger scale development of rental housing was unusual until the turn of the century, when speculators erected row after row of triple-deckers. The advent of electric streetcars expanded commuter service to southern Broad Street in 1892, and whole blocks of triple-deckers soon rose in this section.

South Providence also attracted middle- and upper-income residents during this period. Pine Street continued

to attract middle-income families throughout the century. Broad Street became a fashionable residential thoroughfare beginning in the 1860s; like Elmwood Avenue, Waterman Street, Broadway, and main access routes into cities across the country, Broad Street was the setting for large, stylish houses set on ample lots. The Willard Avenue slaughterhouses relocated to Pawtucket in 1868, and the area immediately north developed as small enclave of substantial dwellings.

The growth of South Providence demanded the expansion of public and private institutions, and most have had important effects on the neighborhood. Neighborhood churches include Christ Episcopal, St. Michael's Roman Catholic, and Calvary Baptist Church. Temple Beth-El was located on Pine Street before building on Broad Street in 1911. Rhode Island Hospital, located on the eighteenth-century hospital grounds, has continuously expanded since its founding in 1863.

By the early twentieth century, most of the land in South Providence had been built upon. Introduction of automobiles made the densely developed neighborhood seem even more crowded and barren as the previously tree-lined streets were widened and small yards were paved over for parking. The neighborhood's population began to decline as many long-time residents abandoned South Providence for suburban areas, and buildings were allowed to deteriorate. The neighborhood became dominated by the city's least affluent citizens, particularly blacks and Hispanics.

Mid-twentieth-century development in South Providence attempted to correct the neighborhood's ills by drastic restructuring of the several areas. The Roger Williams Housing Project (1943) on Thurbers Avenue provided subsidized housing in an open, landscaped setting. Construction of Interstate Highway 95 along the eastern part of the neighborhood necessitated further demolition and exacerbated urban decay. The Comstock Redevelopment Project of the mid-1970s cleared a number of blocks of land south of Pine Street, and some of these lots were filled with suburban-type ranch houses. More recently, Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (SWAP) has become a highly visible and positive force in the neighborhood; its success in transferring formerly abandoned houses to new owner-occupants represents a shift away from dramatic rebuilding schemes to working within the context of the existing neighborhood.

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Despite urban renewal efforts, South Providence today retains significant portions of its architectural heritage. It remains a relatively poor, ethnically mixed area. Continuing attempts to solve its problems, however, keep South Providence a dynamic, emerging area.

WASHINGTON PARK

Washington Park is a primarily residential neighborhood at the southern end of the city. It is, by and large, isolated from other city neighborhoods, set off by the waterfront on the east, Cranston on the south, and Interstate Highway 95 on the west and north. The major thoroughfares run north-west-southeast and include Elmwood Avenue, Broad Street, and Eddy Street — largely commercial strips that intersect at the center of the neighborhood in a commercial node — and Narragansett Boulevard, the residential extension of Allens Avenue. The cross streets are almost entirely residential.

Roger Williams Park, the city's largest, dominates the western half of the neighborhood.

Early activity was limited. Although he never lived here, Roger Williams owned a large tract of land in the western part of what is now Washington Park, and his heirs farmed this land for generations. The area was unsettled when it was set off as part of Cranston in 1754, but in 1773, Nathaniel Williams — Roger Williams's great-grandson — built a small gambrel-roof cottage for his son James on family land just east of present-day Elmwood Avenue. It was given to the city as part of Roger Williams Park in 1871.

The Williams family acquired a neighbor after the War of 1812 when Edward Babcock bought a large farm extending east from Broad Street to the waterfront area. Both Edward and his son William were keen horseracing enthusiasts and soon laid out a triangular racetrack on the farm. Sometime before 1851 the track was made oval and fenced, and in the 1860s racing enthusiast Amasa Sprague formed a partnership to operate a professional racetrack on a leased portion of the Babcock Farm. The venture, known as the Washington Park Trotting Association, was an immediate success, and the Grand National Circuit Races were held here for several years. The principals argued over gambling at the track, and Sprague withdrew to construct a larger facility in Cranston, Narragansett Park, which soon eclipsed the Washington Park track.

When Washington Park, with the more densely populated neighborhoods to its north, was reannexed to the city in 1868, the area was still largely undeveloped. Indeed, in 1871 when Betsy Williams, Nathaniel's granddaughter, offered the city the Williams farm for use as a park, the city only reluctantly accepted this gift of land three miles from the city's center because of its remoteness. The city's lack of recreational facilities, however, made the offer attractive, and in 1873 the city reannexed the portion of the farm remaining in Cranston.

The early 1870s was a boom time in Providence and the nation, and real estate speculation drove the price of suburban land to record levels. Their racetrack abandoned, the Babcocks fortuitously sold most of their large farm at a handsome profit to speculators. These developers platted the neighborhood into its present street pattern, but the Panic of 1873 and the subsequent depression caused a drop in real estate prices and forestalled attempts at filling these remote lots with houses. About two dozen houses stood scattered through the neighborhood in 1875, and few others were built before 1890.

Significant development in Washington Park occurred only after public transportation made the neighborhood more accessible. A horsecar line along Eddy Street, Thurbers Avenue, and Broad Street had reached the neighborhood by 1875, and the Broad Street line was extended to Pawtuxet in 1879. By 1895, the line had been extended along New York Avenue and Narragansett Boulevard. By the turn of the century, lines extended along the lengths of Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue as well.

In 1891, development in Washington Park began in earnest, when the Home Investment Company, led by Colonel Isaac Goff, bought the still undeveloped parcels of the Babcock Farm and began to sell vacant lots as well as lots with completed houses. The company introduced a marketing innovation by selling its real estate here on the installment plan. The property sold well, perhaps too well, for the company ran into financial difficulty in 1897 when some homeowners fell behind in their payments.

Once under way, however, development in Washington Park continued uninterrupted through the first three decades of the twentieth century. Much of this development was of medium-size single-family houses. By 1918, most of Washington Park south of New York Avenue was built up. The tract north of New York Avenue continued to fill well

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into the 1920s, and a small area east of Narragansett Boulevard on Carolina and Georgia Avenues was half filled by 1926. Other parts of the neighborhood were not completely developed until the mid-1930s, particularly the area west of Broad Street near the park.

Pressure for more housing continued well into the twentieth century in Washington Park. The location of war-related industries during both world wars at nearby Field's Point created a demand for housing in the area. At this time, many single-family dwellings were divided into two- or three-family buildings to satisfy this market for rental units. The demand for housing lingered into the 1950s, and some seventy-two new houses were built after 1940.

The intersection of Broad and Eddy Streets at Washington Square has been an important neighborhood node since the 1890s. Small shops began to locate here in the mid-1890s to serve the newly developing neighborhood. At the head of the square is the Broad Street School (1897), built in anticipation of the neighborhood's growth.

Washington Park today is a coherent, fully developed residential neighborhood of tree-lined streets. Architecturally, it is remarkably homogenous because of its relatively rapid development between 1890 and 1930. Most were built as single- or two-family dwellings typical of a middle-class suburb; and triple-deckers, so common elsewhere in Providence, are relatively scarce. This is, because of its nature and its far-flung location in the city, probably the most typically suburban of Providence's streetcar suburbs.

THE WATERFRONT

The narrow strip of land between the Providence Harbor and Interstate Highway 95 from Point Street south to Washington Park and the Cranston city line contains the city's port facilities and adjacent industrial buildings. This is almost all filled land, developed since the late nineteenth century. Allens Avenue forms the major north-south spine of the Waterfront, paralleling the harborline, and a small rail spur follows Allens Avenue, providing rail access to the harbor itself. In the twentieth century the large area at the southern end, Pomegansett Peninsula, was created from several smaller peninsulas for municipal and transportation purposes.

The Narragansett Indians had a coastal village in this area

at the time Roger Williams came to Providence in 1636. European settlement occurred only toward the end of the seventeenth century, and Thomas Field's farm, established at this time, remained isolated well into the eighteenth century.

Development of the Pomegansett Peninsula happened gradually. Both Sassafras Point and Field's Point were fortified in 1775 to defend Providence from a British attack; these fortifications remained untested in the Revolution and the War of 1812 and stood into the twentieth century. In 1824, isolated Field's Point became the site of Providence's smallpox hospital, which remained here until the opening of Chapin Hospital in 1912. The area's most prevalent use, however, was for recreation and it became the site of day excursions, shore dinners, and a small summer colony; such activities continued here until World War I.

Because of its relative remoteness, the Waterfront saw little development for most of the nineteenth century. Shipping remained centered farther upriver, closer to Downtown, or at Fox Point, and industry was accommodated along the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers. The first rail lines through Providence in 1837 traversed the northern tip of the Waterfront: the Providence & Stonington Railroad followed Eddy Street north to Crary Street, where the line ended on a wharf, whence passengers were transferred by ferry across the Providence River to Fox Point. Upon the completion of Union Station Downtown in 1848, the main rail lines moved north to follow the course of the Woonasquatucket and Moshassuck Rivers.

Plans for the development of the area were first formulated in 1872 when the city set forth an ambitious master plan for the harbor redevelopment, including a new harbor line running south to Cranston. The Panic of 1873 and the subsequent recession postponed this project. By the early 1880s, the Harbor Junction Line — a continuation of the early railroad along Eddy Street — had been extended east (north of Sassafras Point and south of Thurbers Avenue) to the Harbor Junction Wharf; built to the 1872 harbor line, the long wharf made the connection between rail and shipping lines. About the same time, Allens Avenue was platted along the marshy shoreline, although it remained unbuilt until the mid-1890s.

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The remoteness and especially the low elevation of the Pomegansett Peninsula no doubt informed the city's decision to locate its first sewage-treatment plant there. The city purchased Sassafras Point in 1887, began construction of intercepting sewers in 1889, and opened the system in 1897. The pumping station, precipitation tanks, and sludge presses were in operation by 1900.

The first development along the newly opened Allens Avenue was the construction of a Providence Gas Company plant at Public Street in the early 1890s, later replaced by the more extensive plant still located on the north side of Pomegansett Peninsula east of Sassafras Point, begun in 1900.

Intensive development of the Waterfront came in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Several businesses located in the area between 1900 and 1910. More significantly, the city began construction of the harbor improvements outlined in the 1870s, enlarging the ship channel to a width of six hundred feet and a depth of thirty feet. Much of the regularization of the shoreline of the Pomegansett Peninsula took place during these years. The land created by filling Sassafras Cove was leased to an oil company and filled with oil storage tanks. In 1913, the Terminal Warehouse Company erected its large warehouses on Allens Avenue opposite Oxford Street; these two imposing, five-story, brick structures were originally intended as end pieces of a far larger structure, never built. Slightly north, just below Public Street, the state erected the State Pier Number One in 1914. These improvements to shipping and warehouse facilities in the early years of the century were part of a major civic and private effort to advance Providence as a port capable of handling international traffic.

Military development during the First and Second World Wars was responsible for some of the changes in topography and use of the Pomegansett Peninsula. In 1917, the Army commandeered the land occupied by the summer colony, removed the cottages and shore dinner hall, and leveled the site, including the Revolutionary War fort. The United States Maritime Commission selected Field's Point as the site for a shipbuilding facility early in 1942, and the Rheem Shipbuilding Company built sixty-four ships — including Liberty Ships and combat-cargo ships — before hostilities ceased. These war-support industrial facilities had been abandoned by the late 1940s.

Since World War II, the waterfront has continued as a shipping center and industrial area. The World War II installations have been converted for commercial use. Several businesses have located here, including a lumber yard and one of Providence's few drive-in theatres. The sewage treatment plant has been expanded and modernized. Port facilities have been improved with the installation of new loading machinery.

While the waterfront has yet to realize the extensive development first envisioned in the 1870s and first implemented around 1900, the area is still a developing area, the focus of economic development in the 1980s.

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THE WEST END

The West End is a large, primarily residential neighborhood developed principally between the Civil War and the Great Depression. Housing in the neighborhood includes large, late nineteenth-century former single-family dwellings (now converted for apartment use), particularly along major thoroughfares, as well as two- and three-family houses on the side streets. Industry has played an important role in the area's development since the middle years of the nineteenth century, and one of the city's two new industrial districts, Huntington Industrial Park, is located here.

The West End remained an undeveloped hinterland throughout the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century. Several roads running south and west from the settled part of Providence first crossed the area soon after 1700: Westminster Street (1714), Cranston Street (1717), and Greenwich Street, now Elmwood Avenue (1731). In 1739, Obadiah Brown established a tavern in Hoyle Square at the intersection of Cranston and Westminster Streets. By 1783, a hamlet comprising eight houses near the tavern represented the area's most intensive development.

The population remained sparse until the middle of the nineteenth century; development was limited to farms and country retreats. Joseph Williams built a farmhouse on the south side of Potters Avenue just west of Elmwood Avenue about 1783; now heavily altered, the house stands at 43 Calder Street. Williams's neighbor to the north, Ebenezer Knight Dexter, likewise maintained a farm that supplied produce for Providence markets. Prominent citizens who built country retreats here included John Mawney, Captain Samuel Snow, Brown University president Asa Messer, Anson and Arthur Potter, and Christopher Ellery, whose altered dwelling still stands at 165-169 Peace Street.

Industry first came to the West End in the early years of the nineteenth century. In 1822, Earl Carpenter built an ice house on Benedict Pond, and by 1849 he had also established a similar operation on the north side of Mashapaug Pond; these facilities continued in operation into the twentieth century. The first factories came to the area around mid-century: the New England Butt Company established a small factory on Pearl at Perkins Street in 1849 and expanded

production here in the 1880s; in the 1860s, Winsor & Brown built a gun manufactory at 63 Central Street, and this frame building became part of the Jones Warehouse complex in the 1890s. In the 1860s, the lowlands near Long Pond became a center for the West End's industrial activity. The Elmwood Cotton Mills began operation on Daboll Street in 1866. The north end of the pond was heavily industrialized between 1860 and 1875 with the erection of a Providence Gas Company gasometer at 42 Westfield Street and an A. & W. Sprague ironworks factory between Cromwell and Sprague Streets. Charles H. Perkins built several industrial buildings in the vicinity in the 1880s and 1890s. Though the pond has been filled, this area along Dexter and Bucklin Streets remains a commercial/industrial area, including operations of the gas company, jewelry manufacturers, and the American Standard Watch Case Co. The largest plant in the West End is the Gorham Manufacturing Co. facility completed in 1890 at 333 Adelaide Avenue, on the east side of Mashapaug Pond. The Huntington Industrial Park brought new light industry to the west side of the pond in the 1960s and 1970s.

Urbanization of the West End spread westward from the early settlement at Hoyle Square, along Westminster Street and — to a lesser degree — along Cranston Street. By the

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mid-1820s several houses stood on Westminster Street between Downtown and Olneyville, including those at 1208 and 1228. Ebenezer Knight Dexter gave this incipient neighborhood a civic focus in 1824 when he left his farm to the city for use as a military training field. By mid-century, urban development had begun to fill the neighborhood with houses almost to Dexter Parade. Much of this housing has been replaced, but the small Greek Revival house at 14 Dexter Street is a typical structure.

Streetcar service encouraged residential development here on a much larger scale. The first streetcar line in Providence, opened in 1865, ran along Westminster Street between Downtown and Olneyville; additional lines on Cranston Street and Elmwood Avenue came later the same year. This post-Civil War residential development follows two divergent ethnic and economic paths. The area north of Cranston Street centering around the Dexter Parade developed as a middle-class neighborhood, populated primarily by Yankees. The area south of Cranston Street housed successive waves of lower- and middle-class immigrant groups.

The houses built around the Dexter Parade were primarily one- and two-family dwellings. Those on the Parade were the largest and most stylish, set on ample lots. The two Queen Anne houses at 77 and 81 Parade Street epitomize this development. The side streets west of Parade Street are typically two-family, mansard-roof dwellings, like that at 45 Chapin Avenue. To serve this population, the Cranston Street Baptist Church was established in 1869.

The southern portion of the West End has always been ethnically diverse. While the area just west of Trinity Square had a sizeable upper-middle-class Yankee population — a link between similar areas around the Dexter Parade and northern Elmwood — the area became a heavily Irish neighborhood after about 1850, particularly the part just north of Mashapaug Pond. By 1870, the area south of Waldo Street to beyond Huntington Avenue on the west side of Mashapaug Pond between Cranston and Madison Streets was a predominantly Irish neighborhood, with a number of residents laborers at the Elmwood Cotton Mills. The West End Irish had no church of their own until 1871, when the large, clapboard Church of the Assumption opened on Potters Avenue; its presence reinforced and encouraged the growth of the Irish settlement. In 1878, French Canadians formed their own parish and built the present edifice, St. Charles

Borromeo, on Dexter Street in 1915. Blacks had begun to settle in the southern part of the West End by the 1860s, establishing the Mount Zion Methodist Church on Wadsworth Street in 1861.

The military use of the Dexter Training Ground continued in 1907 with the construction of the Cranston Street Armory on the field's southern end.

By the turn of the century, most of the West End was densely built, although Providence's continued population growth in these years encouraged filling every lot — and occasionally the backs of occupied house lots — with multiple-family dwellings, particularly triple deckers. The West End remained a relatively stable neighborhood during the first three decades of the twentieth century, but the citywide decline of inner-city neighborhoods included the West End: houses were divided into more and smaller units, and long-time residents abandoned the area for the suburbs.

The West End's history includes a sampling of almost every phase imaginable: rural hinterland, stylish streetcar suburb, ethnic melting pot, decayed inner-city neighborhood. In recent years, it has begun yet another phase as revitalization of its old houses by area residents has become increasingly common.

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III. PROVIDENCE:
AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

PREHISTORIC INDIAN OCCUPATION
AND SETTLEMENT

Human presence in Rhode Island, and in the Providence area, stretches back ten thousand years before Roger Williams was granted the land that became Rhode Island in 1636. Over this long period of Native American occupation, substantial changes occurred in the physical environment and in human subsistence practices. The climate warmed, melting the last glaciers, causing sea level to rise as much as fifty feet, and transforming the landscape from spruce-dominated to deciduous forest. For most of this period, the Indians relied on wild plants and animals for their sustenance, using the coastal and interior areas at different times of year to take advantage of the seasonal availability of different foods and other necessities. During the late spring and summer, prehistoric people lived along the coast, harvesting herring and shellfish. As fall set in and winter approached, the same group would journey inland for dependable supplies of firewood and favored hunting grounds. By 1,000 A.D. the Indians were beginning to supplement their diet with domestic crops. As agriculture was gradually adopted, corn, squash, beans, and pumpkin were cultivated.

The greatest environmental changes occurred between 8,000 and 6,000 B.C. As the climate warmed and the glaciers melted, sea level rose, inundating the coastal plain rivers and forming Narragansett Bay. Spruce forests gave way to pine and later to oak. Mastodon, caribou, moose, and giant beaver inhabited these forests and were hunted by the Indians. Sites from the Paleo-Indian period are rare because there were relatively few inhabitants at this time; there is only one such site recorded in Rhode Island, in Lincoln on the Wenscott Reservoir.

Between 6,000 and 500 B.C. the climate continued to warm, becoming even milder than it is today between 3,000

and 1,000 B.C. Sea levels continued to rise, reaching a level close to today's by about 2,000 B.C. By this time the Providence River had been transformed from a fresh water river to a salt water estuary, and the salt water cove that Roger Williams encountered and settled was established.

The establishment of the Cove and the stabilization of the environment allowed the formation of extensive tidal mud flats which supported the growth of abundant shellfish populations. Forests continued to change from the earlier conifers to a deciduous woodland which sheltered a greater variety of animals and plants, and thus could support a greater number of human beings. This increase can be read in the archaeological record. There are many sites dating to the formation of the cove containing a broad assortment of artifacts. Among these artifacts are tools for hunting deer, birds, and small mammals, for preparing nuts and other wild plant foods, and for working wooden objects; a variety of projectile points, some probably the first true arrowheads, typically fashioned of quartz, quartzite, or green shale; and scrapers and drills, probably used to prepare hides or other materials for clothing or adornment. Ground stone gouges and axes and soapstone bowls appear for the first time.

Between 500 B.C. and 1,500 A.D. the climate cooled slightly and the forest took on a hickory-chestnut composition. Sites dating from this period are larger than earlier sites because larger groups began living together, managing and harvesting the abundant nut crops or exploiting the coastal shellfish and spring runs of alewife and other anadromous fish. The oil from nuts probably was extracted and stored for the winter in clay pots, while fish were dried and packed, enabling some groups to live in the same area year-round. When the climate warmed again slightly later in the period, the growing season increased, allowing a predictable yearly harvest of corn and other domestic crops. These agricultural products helped ensure an adequate food supply and further encouraged year-round residence in one place, although inland hunting and gathering were continued.

It is likely that throughout the period following the forma-

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tion of the salt cove and full establishment of the modern estuary (ca. 2,000 B.C.), that the Providence area would have been a near-optimal place to live. Fresh water resources would have been available from the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers. Marine foods would have been available in the Cove and Bay. An abundance of archaeological sites are recorded in Providence documenting Indian use. Most of these sites were discovered and recorded as the city developed and grew during the 19th and 20th centuries: a soapstone mask, stone projectile points, and other stone tools and objects were found in the Field's Point area; Indian shell middens were reported along the Sakonnet River; stone artifacts were discovered in the Neutaconkanut Hill area, and Indian tools have been found in various places around the Brown University campus. Perhaps the most significant discovery occurred recently, between 1982 and 1983 at the site of the new train station. At that location, beneath several feet of urban fill, on the banks of the old Salt Cove, archaeologists discovered the remains of 7,000 years of continuous Indian occupation. The project, conducted as part of the environmental study required on federally-funded projects, contributed a wealth of information on how Indian groups adapted to the transformation of the Providence area to a salt water estuary.

By the time of the first European contact, in the early 1500s, the Indians were settled around a number of semi-permanent villages led by chiefs called sachems. They were subjects of the Narragansetts, whose domain included all of what is now Rhode Island west of Narragansett Bay. One of these villages may have been in Providence on Mashpaug Pond.

The Narragansetts maintained other settlements in addition to a main village. These settlements were linked to the seasonal availability of different foods and other necessities. According to Roger Williams, each family maintained summer gardens on the coastal plain. Following harvest, inland hunting camps were established, and in the spring, families would move to locations along the rivers and inlets to harvest migrating fish. The major settlement, however, was an inland village from which all of these seasonal activities were coordinated and where the sachem probably resided year round. In addition to these activities, the Narragansetts were noted for their manufacture of shell and metal objects and their abilities as stone masons.

Prior to permanent European settlement in New England, Indian contact with explorers and traders resulted in the spread of diseases for which the native peoples had no resistance. Between 1616 and 1619 these diseases struck the coastal tribes of southeastern New England with great severity, depopulating whole villages and upsetting traditional tribal boundaries and alliances. The Narragansett Indians, who were not affected by the epidemic and were only lightly touched by the smallpox epidemic that followed in 1633-1634, became the dominant tribe in New England.

SETTLEMENT: 1636-1700

At the time of European settlement, the area of Rhode Island was the territory of the Narragansett Indians and was not included in any chartered British colony. Early in 1636, Roger Williams, banished from Massachusetts for his unorthodox preaching, journeyed south from Salem to this unregulated wilderness where he planned to establish a new home free of religious control for his family and others. After wintering with Wampanoag Indians near present-day Warren, Rhode Island, he and a few friends who had joined him from Salem set out to find a place to build their new community. The site they finally selected was on the eastern shore of the Providence River near a fresh water spring, roughly along present-day North Main Street in the city of Providence. The spot was at the crossroads of Indian trails heading north to Pawtucket Falls, west toward Connecticut, and east to the Seekonk River; in addition, it was at the head of Narragansett Bay near the confluence of the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket rivers and thus was accessible by land or water. The Narragansett sachems Miantonomi and Canonicus granted Roger Williams a tract of land extending as far north as Pawtucket Falls, west to Neutaconkanut Hill, south to the Pawtuxet River, and east to the Seekonk River. Additional grants made by 1659 extended the area called Providence Plantations to most of the current Providence County west of the Blackstone River.

From the first, the colonists were dedicated to the principle of religious liberty; separation of church and state was crystallized in the compact of August 20, 1637, in the words "We do promise to subject ourselves . . . to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good," but "only in civil things." The separation of church and state was partly responsible for the pattern of early Providence growth.

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Houses in Massachusetts and Connecticut towns often were grouped around the Congregational Church set on one side of a central town green. In Providence, however, where dissenters were welcomed, no church was built until 1700, and no village green was ever contemplated. Instead, the proprietors laid out deep, narrow houselots in a straggling line by the river along Towne Street (today's North and South Main Streets), and extending east over the steep hill to the present Hope Street. Houses were built at the front of the lots, reserving the rear portions for gardens, orchards, and family burial grounds. In 1646, John Smith, one of the original settlers, was granted land by the town to set up a gristmill at the falls of the Moshassuck River, near the junction of Charles and Mill Streets, thereby supplying the young settlement with flour; this became the town's civic center for fifty years or more. The tax list of 1650 shows 51 houses made up the compact part of the town, most of them strung along Towne Street with a few more nearer Pawtucket or on Foxes' Hill. Two were on the Weybosset side of the river and were reached by boat or by fording the river. None of these buildings has survived.

Providence remained an agricultural community throughout the seventeenth century, the Rhode Island colony's "second city," very much overshadowed by Newport. The steep hillside hindered farming, but lands on the west side of the river were set aside as common ground for raising corn, tobacco and other crops and for grazing sheep, cattle, and swine. At first townsmen subsisted on their crops with no surplus, but gradually exports of livestock, meat, flour, and tobacco were sent to nearby Massachusetts and were shipped to Newfoundland, Long Island, and the southern plantations.

As Providence families struggled to establish homes and farms in the early years, settlers in the towns of Portsmouth, Newport, and Warwick did likewise. Alternately cooperating and feuding, the four towns only partially succeeded in creating a central colonial government, and the territory remained without a royal charter. However, in 1663, King Charles II granted Rhode Island an unusually liberal charter which proclaimed the intention of the colonists "to hold forth a livelie experiment that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained . . . with full liberty in religious concernments." The charter, which granted the colonists

religious liberty and a degree of political independence, remained the foundation of Rhode Island government for nearly two centuries, until 1843.

In March of 1675 during King Philip's War, Providence, like the other towns on the mainland, was burned by the Indians. As far as is known, only two houses escaped. The settlement was quickly rebuilt following the original plan. By 1700 the town had 1,200 inhabitants, most of whom were living on the shores of the cove and the Providence River along the east side of Towne Street. The gristmill and tannery had been rebuilt and, in addition, a sawmill, iron works, lime kilns and a blacksmith shop were established. A schoolhouse, town stocks, a prison, and at least four taverns were built also. And the first church building, described at the time as "in the shape of a haycap with a fireplace in the middle, the smoke escaping from a hole in the roof," was erected at the corner of North Main and Smith Streets for the Baptist congregation. In 1680, Elder Pardon Tillinghast petitioned for "a little spot of land — for the building himself of a storehouse with the privilege of a wharf also." This was the first wharf, and the next year a town wharf was built opposite Weybosset Point. However, further waterfront development was delayed by farmers' concerns about the difficulty in crossing the river with "Cannooes & Boates, Rideing & Carting & Swimming over of Cattell" if the shore became too built up with wharves.

Beyond the compact part of town, a network of roads radiated into an expanding hinterland. The most important of these on the east side of the river were present-day North Main, Rochambeau, Olney, Hope, Angell, and Wickenden Streets; and running to the west were Weybosset and Broad Streets and Branch Avenue.

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SEAPORT TOWN: 1700-1772

During the eighteenth century, Providence was transformed from a rural hamlet into a seaport trading with other colonies, the West Indies, Africa, and England. Construction of new residences, warehouses, manufacturing and commercial shops, and an increasing number of public buildings created a dense urban fabric along the waterfront and spilled over to the Weybosset side. With growing commercial wealth, the establishment of a library, a newspaper, and even a college, Providence began to rival Newport as Rhode Island's leading center.

The key to Providence's growth in the eighteenth century was the maritime trade initiated and promoted by the town's leading citizens: the Crawfords, Tillinghasts, Powers, and Browns among others. When a bridge was constructed across the Providence River at Weybosset Neck in 1711, the center section was designed so it could be moved to permit the passage of ships into the Cove. Over the course of the century, the eastern bank of the river came to be lined with wharves.

Among the mainstays of shipping were the coastal carrying trade, which transported local produce from port to port along the Atlantic seaboard, and the so-called West Indies "triangle" trade. The staple West Indian products of sugar and molasses were brought to Providence to be converted into rum by shoreside distilleries. The rum was shipped to the coast of Africa where it was used for the purchase of slaves, who in turn were shipped to the West Indies for labor in the sugar plantations. Other important port activities included ship building and the manufacture for export of lime, iron goods, spermaceti candles, and chocolate. The single most lucrative commercial venture was the importation of manufactured goods from England and the Continent, but it also required the greatest investment in ships, warehousing, and cargoes. Thus, direct trade was generally carried on in conjunction with the coastal or triangle routes. During this period, Providence's waterfront bristled with the activity of wharves, warehouses, distilleries, and some 185 shops. In addition to being the town's center of commerce, the port was the primary communication link with the rest of the world. In 1763 regular packet boat service was established between Providence and Newport, and in 1767 the first regular stagecoach service to Boston was inaugurated.

Providence's population increased more than threefold during the eighteenth century from 1,200 in 1700 to 4,321 in 1774 (including 151 merchants, 217 tradesmen, 6 Indians and 285 blacks). This impressive increase of inhabitants nonetheless left the town about half as large as rival Newport. Construction of new buildings expanded the densely settled sections of the east side and encouraged the growth of the town across the Providence River. By 1776, 310 families, or more than a third of all residents, lived on the west side, most along Weybosset or Westminster Streets. In all, 894 houses could be counted in Providence by the century's end.

Civic activities and new public buildings reflected the flow of wealth into the town. The colonial legislature and the courts were housed in a new Court House (the Old State House, 150 Benefit Street) constructed in 1763 on North Main Street. The Providence Library Company, formed in 1764, also was housed in the Court House. The first printing press was brought to town in 1762 by William Goddard who commenced publication of the *Providence Gazette*. In 1770 the first building for Rhode Island College (later Brown University) went up at the top of the hill known ever since as College Hill. A market building was constructed at Market Square at the eastern end of the Weybosset Bridge in 1772. Perhaps the greatest single monument to Providence's colonial growth and civic pride was the First Baptist Meeting House, constructed in 1775 and still a major landmark. The building can hold 1,500 people (about a third of the town's entire population at the time) and was planned to accommodate the commencement ceremonies of the college, a practice which has continued ever since.

Beyond the built-up parts of town, farms ringed Providence and supplied produce and meat to townspeople who pursued commercial occupations. In order to travel between town and countryside, the seventeenth-century highway network was augmented, creating today's Douglas Avenue, Admiral Street, Chalkstone Avenue, Orms Street, Westminster Street, Cranston Street, Elmwood Avenue, and Broad Street. In 1730 the town boundaries had included all of present-day Providence County west of the Blackstone River. However, as farms were established in the outlying areas, the General Assembly set off lands as the new towns of Glocester, Smithfield, and Scituate (all in 1731), Cranston (1754), Johnston (1759), and North Providence (1765-7).

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The area of the town of Providence was reduced to about six square miles in 1767, a small fraction of its 1730 size. Nonetheless, large agricultural areas within these smaller limits still surrounded the densely built-up town center at the port.

PROVIDENCE IN THE REVOLUTION: 1772-1783

As a community whose livelihood depended on maritime commerce, Providence was directly affected by English trade regulations enforced on the colonies during the 1760s and 1770s. This series of trade acts and the British government's responses to American objections to the acts led colonists to consider independence. Stephen Hopkins, a Providence resident and merchant whose house still stands at 15 Hopkins Street, was the governor of Rhode Island colony in 1765 when he wrote "The Rights of Colonies Examined," one of several revolutionary pamphlets he authored. Hopkins organized the Providence "political club" of other civic leaders in 1766, was a member of the Continental Congress, and signed the Declaration of Independence.

Local violence against Great Britain occurred in 1772 when the British revenue schooner *Gaspee* was scuttled and burned off Warwick Neck by a band of Providence men. The *Gaspee* was assigned to patrol Narragansett Bay to enforce the hated trade acts, and her destruction was seen as a demonstration of Rhode Islanders' objections to the acts as well as a practical means of curtailing their enforcement. British tea was burned at the Market House in March, 1775, and on May 4, 1776, two months before the formal Declaration of Independence, the Rhode Island legislature, meeting in Providence, renounced allegiance to King George III.

During the war, University Hall was used as a barracks and hospital for troops, and the Brick School House (24 Meeting Street) was converted into an arsenal for storing ammunition. Beacons to warn inhabitants of the enemy's approach were erected near the present corner of Prospect and Meeting Streets on College Hill and on the Weybosset side near the corner of Beacon and Point Streets. Fortifications and batteries were established at the Prospect Street beacon, Fox Point, the entrance to the Seekonk River, Field's Point, Robin Hill (which lay north of Field's Point), and at Fort Sullivan (bounded by Broad, Foster, Chestnut, and Friendship Streets). Stephen Hopkins carried Rhode Island's plea for the creation of a continental navy to Congress, won appointment of his brother Esek as its first commodore, and

secured contracts for Providence to build two of the thirteen frigates planned as the core of the fleet. Esek Hopkins' house remains at 97 Admiral Street. General George Washington and Comte de Rochambeau visited Providence in 1780 and 1781; the French army camped in South Providence on its way to join Washington's army at Yorktown in 1781 and camped at the Dexter farm at North Main Street and Rochambeau Avenue on the return march in the fall of 1782.

Providence profited during the Revolutionary War by selling cannon and other weapons, ships and naval stores, and provisions to the American and French forces. In addition, privateering proved especially lucrative. In order to harass British shipping, private ships-of-war were authorized to capture and sell enemy cargo ships, or "prizes." When John Howland returned to Providence in early 1777 after fifteen months duty with the Continental Army, he wrote in his diary, "the year 1776 was mostly employed in privateering, and many whom I had left in poor circumstance were now rich men. The wharves were crowded with large ships . . . loaded with rich products." However, in December, 1776, the English occupied Newport and blockaded Narragansett Bay. Until the blockade was lifted in October, 1779, sea traffic was severely curtailed, and during much of the war Providence ships were forced to sail from neighboring ports in Connecticut or Massachusetts, or goods were laboriously shipped overland. Nonetheless, 129 vessels belonging to Providence came into port in 1781 after the blockade was lifted. Unlike Newport, which suffered terribly during occupation by the British, Providence emerged from the war with its ships, fortunes, and merchant ranks intact.

RHODE ISLAND'S FIRST CITY: 1783-1832

The close of the war in 1783 was seen by many in Providence as an invitation to capitalize on the town's broadening prospects. As before the war, the local economy was initially dominated by maritime trade, although the merchants were now forced to discover new markets and to participate in more complex global commercial relationships. Of equal importance in this era was the emergence of Providence as the hub of overland transportation in the region, as an early industrial center, and as the financial capital of Rhode Island and neighboring sections of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The town's growth was rapid; population quadrupled from 4,312 in 1782 to 16,836 in 1830. In 1832, Providence was

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incorporated as Rhode Island's only city, and its future as the state's metropolitan center was becoming apparent.

During the 1780s, Providence merchants resumed their profitable maritime trade after making a few costly false starts. As American nationals, they were denied preferential treatment in dealing with the British Empire, and their trade in provisions, rum, iron goods, and spermaceti candles suffered. On the positive side, Americans were no longer prohibited from competing with the British East India Company in trading with India and China. The first American ship to enter the China trade was the *Empress of China*, owned by

Robert Morris of Philadelphia, sent out in 1784. In 1787, John Brown of Providence sent his ship *General Washington* to the Madeira Islands, India, and Canton, China, and ten months later he and his partners earned a thirty percent profit on their \$57,000 investment. It was sufficient to interest other Providence merchants, and from 1787 to 1828 Providence averaged a total of three voyages to China yearly. A single voyage could realize a profit of \$400,000 on a \$200,000 investment. During this period, the Orient was only one of several profitable trading areas for merchants. An average of 60 Providence ships per year traded with South America and the West Indies, and 30 per year embarked for Europe. Rhode Islanders exported local provisions to South America; they sent Oriental tea and textiles and South American rum, tobacco, and coffee to Europe; they traded Iberian specie to China; and they imported European manufactures, Baltic naval stores and iron, and oriental goods for domestic consumption.

Expansion of foreign trade required expanded port facilities. The eastern shore of the Providence River remained the center of port activity; the Providence Customs District was created in 1790 with offices on South Main Street. However, the area already was overcrowded, and many of the old wharves were incapable of receiving the large new ships which sailed to the Orient and Europe. About 1790, John Brown constructed wharves, warehouses, and shops in the vicinity of India Point Park in the Fox Point neighborhood. He also built a bridge across the Seekonk River named Washington Bridge, on the site of the present Washington Bridge, to improve overland connections with the wharves. Long Wharf, the first on the Weybosset side, was built in 1792, and shops, warehouses, distilleries, and shipyards

were located nearby. In 1816, the Weybosset bridge was replaced for the sixth time since 1711, and unlike its predecessors, which had moveable center spans to allow the passage of ships, the new bridge was built with a fixed center span, henceforth restricting boat traffic to the southern part of the river and India Point.

Commercial life continued to be centered in offices and shops at Market Square. The Providence Bank (1791), the first bank in the state, was founded by merchants and was located at 50 South Main Street in a mansion built and designed by merchant Joseph Brown. Within a decade three insurance companies were formed with offices on South Main Street. The steep slope of College Hill discouraged expansion of the business district to the east, and after a fire in 1801 destroyed 37 buildings on South Main Street, some businesses rebuilt across the river, and the development of the Weybosset side as a business center began.

Daniel Anthony's map of 1823 reveals how substantially Providence grew in the decades following the Revolutionary War. Nearly 13,000 new inhabitants since 1780 accelerated residential construction to keep pace with the growth of population, the most successful merchants building large and stylish mansions. Building generally followed the early linear town plan. On College Hill, houses were constructed along Benefit Street parallel to the original Towne Street and in Fox Point adjacent to the new India Point port facilities. On the western side of the river, houses were built along streets radiating from the Weybosset Bridge into today's downtown. Even with its growth, all of built-up Providence remained within comfortable walking distance, and by and large, residential, commercial, and industrial activities co-existed side by side, as did residents of different social and economic status.

Beyond the densely built-up parts of town, farms continued to grow food for the local market. In addition, "country seats" were established by some wealthy families who sought to escape the bustle of town life and the sometimes oppressive heat, stench, and mosquitoes of the summer. For example, Ebenezer Knight Dexter maintained a fine country house and farm (300 Angell Street) in addition to his residence at 187 Benefit Street. Travel in the countryside became easier as roads were improved; eleven new or up-graded roads were chartered as turnpikes between 1803 and

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1825. In 1828 the transformation of the Moshassuck River into the Blackstone Canal was completed, and interior sections as far north and west as Worcester, Massachusetts were drawn into Providence's orbit.

Many new roads and turnpikes through the country ran to water-powered mills including those in the hamlets of Manton, Ruttenburg, and Olneyville along the Woonasquatucket River and to more isolated mills located on streams in surrounding towns. At the same time that Providence's maritime prosperity reached its height in the late 1780s and the 1790s, merchant Moses Brown organized a company to manufacture cotton textiles. Early experiments failed until the Pawtucket mechanics David Wilkinson and Sylvanus Brown working with English immigrant Samuel Slater transformed Moses Brown's collection of machines into a workable Arkwright system. Factory spinning of cotton yarn commenced on December 20, 1790, and the American Industrial Revolution began. Moses Brown, his son-in-law William Almy, and his nephew, Smith Brown, continued to invest in cotton mills during the 1790s, taking Samuel Slater into partnership. During the first decade of the nineteenth century other Providence merchants began to divert funds from maritime to industrial enterprises. This shift of capital to land-based mills was accelerated by the embargo on American shipping enacted by Congress in 1807 in an unsuccessful attempt to keep the United States out of the war between Great Britain and France. The hiatus in textile imports from England during the War of 1812 was another impetus to Providence merchants like Edward Carrington to invest in cotton mills, which were earning profits of 20 to 30 percent. Rhode Island was the nation's early leader in textile production, and most of the state's 100 mills in 1815 were located in Providence County. The first mills were driven by water wheels and were necessarily located on water-privileges, mostly outside Providence's borders along the Pawtucket and Blackstone rivers where power sites abounded. There were a few water-power sites in Providence, however. The Union Mill (1805) and the Merino Mill (1812), which still stands at 61 Ponagansett Avenue, were located in Olneyville. What is more, Providence investors supplied the capital, managerial ability, technical knowledge, and trans-

portation and marketing services which were fundamental to the industrialization of much of the state.

During the early nineteenth century, Providence's growth and changes in the community convinced some residents that the traditional town-meeting government was no longer adequate to manage civic affairs. By 1810, Providence was one of the seven largest communities in the United States, but local government had not kept pace; it was virtually unchanged from colonial days. Its finances, for example, were poorly managed and required increasing attention as the cost of basic municipal services ballooned. In the 1820s the town still owed \$7,000 for so-called permanent improvements made to roads in the 1790s which had already worn out; meanwhile as Providence rapidly grew, costs for new highways and bridges soared, increasing fivefold during the decade. Other needed improvements included oil street-lamps, flagstone sidewalks on South Main Street, and new schools. In 1800 the town organized a public, tax-supported school system (according to some, the first in the United States), and by 1832, 12 schools had been constructed to educate 1,200 pupils. The net result of making these civic improvements, together with the ever-increasing cost of poor relief, was that town debt rose from \$22,554 in 1800 to \$110,433 in 1830, representing an alarming 220 percent rise in per capita debt.

The inadequacy of the police force was another concern which led citizens to believe a new form of government was needed. In 1775 Providence established a system of daytime constables and night watchmen who were supposed to report fires, maintain order, conduct the disorderly to jail, and enforce the town curfew. However, the watchmen's effectiveness was limited; they had no uniform or badge of identification, no weapons, no special arrest powers, and were liable to damage suits brought by those they restrained or took into custody.

From time to time, citizens took the law into their own hands. In 1824 and in 1831, vigilante actions turned into race riots against blacks, who constituted a tenth of the town's population. The riots finally prodded townsmen to a realization that the methods of informal community pressure which had worked half a century earlier were no longer

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effective in maintaining civic order. Providence was incorporated as a city in 1832, and in his inaugural address delivered at the Old State House on June 4, 1832, Providence's first mayor, Samuel W. Bridgham, concluded that the town had become "too heterogeneous and unmanageable" to continue the old form of government. The change in the form of local government was symptomatic of new conditions being created by accelerating physical and population growth, cultural diversity, and an industrial economy.

INDUSTRIAL CITY: 1832-1865

The middle years of the nineteenth century were a turning point in Providence's history. The newly incorporated city adjusted to the administrative demands of its own growth, and continuity with the past still could be found in its population, economy, and physical appearance. By the time of the Civil War, on the other hand, the city was engulfed by the two forces which would radically transform its physical and social character: industry and immigration.

During the nineteenth century, Providence became a major manufacturing center for textiles, base metals, and jewelry. A crucial factor in making Providence an industrial city was the growth and expansion of the railway system between 1835 and 1848. Nationally, 1820 to 1840 was a period of "transportation revolution" involving construction of turnpikes, canals, steamboats, and railroads. Economic historians have concluded that inexpensive overland transportation was a necessary condition for the emergence of industry in the northeast and agriculture in the north-central states. Each of the several modes had its day, but railroads emerged preeminent by 1840, when America had more railroad track than any other country in the world, and most of that was laid in New England and New York. At first, rail lines were used as links in transportation systems which also included shipping or canals. For example, the Providence and Boston line (1835) had its southern terminus at the harbor in Fox Point. The Providence and Stonington line (1837), which connected to steamboat service between Stonington and New York, had its northern end at Burgess

Cove in South Providence, and passengers and freight continuing north were ferried across the harbor to Fox Point to connect with the Providence and Boston. Expanded service was provided in 1848 by the Providence and Worcester and the New York, Providence, and Worcester lines. That same year the upper Providence River cove was partially filled, and tracks were constructed to a new passenger station at Exchange Place. The impressive station (replaced by the present station in 1898) was appropriately called Union Station since all lines converged at this location in the center of the city; one historian has called it the first major railroad station in the United States. Much as today, the city's major rail line entered from the north following the line of the Moshassuck River, passed through Union Station, proceeded westward parallel to the Woonasquatucket River to Olneyville, turned south and exited Providence running parallel to Elmwood Avenue.

Along with the coming of cheap, efficient railroad transportation, the development of steam-powered factories was crucial to the growth of manufacturing in Providence. The first textile mills in Rhode Island were powered by water, and only a few mills were located within the city, along the Woonasquatucket River. In 1827, however, Samuel Slater built the Steam Cotton Mill. It was the first mill in Providence to use a steam engine as its sole source of power, and it was located near the waterfront at Ship and Dyer Streets with access to coal boats. The introduction of steam power not only released mills from their dependence on water-power sites, but increased their manufacturing efficiency and favored Providence as a transport center for raw materials, fuel, and finished goods. By 1850, 8 cotton mills and 2 woolen mills employing 1,198 workers were operating in Providence, and a decade later these figures had doubled. Though the Providence textile industry was expanding by 1860, Providence manufacturers were in general overshadowed by the larger operations of rural textile mills. However, city men often were the founders, directors, and bankers of the big mills outside Providence. The venerable Providence families, Brown and Ives, were major investors in the Lonsdale Manufacturing Company which owned mill villages along the Blackstone River; Robert and Moses Lippitt, who owned factories in Woonsocket, lived on Hope Street in Providence; while Robert Knight, who produced

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cotton goods in Warwick and West Warwick mills under the label "Fruit of the Loom," lived on Elmwood Avenue.

The rapid expansion of the textile industry in Providence and throughout New England was made possible by the invention and production of improved spinning and weaving equipment, steam engines, and other machinery, and Providence became a center for the production of textile machinery, steam engines and a variety of base-metal products. The Providence Machine Company (1838), an outgrowth of the machine shop at the Steam Cotton Mill, was among the first in the United States to produce sophisticated spinning equipment. The Phenix Iron Foundry (1830), originally located on Eddy Street, produced the earliest American textile-printing machines. Steam engine companies, which were less directly linked to textiles and had broad applications to a number of industries, were another prominent area of manufacture. In 1848, George C. Corliss patented an automatic cutoff valve that dramatically increased the efficiency of stationary steam engines. The Corliss Steam Engine Company (1856) placed Providence in the forefront of the industry and accelerated the adoption of steam power in local factories. Machine tools, files, screws, nails, and sewing machines were also important Providence manufactures. Between 1850 and 1860 the number of metals firms in Providence quadrupled to 94 and employed more than three thousand workers.

Providence's third major industry, jewelry and silver, had its origin during the 1790s when Seril and Nehemiah Dodge, working in their shop on College Hill, developed a method of rolling a thin layer of gold onto copper; with their new gold-plating process, they could undersell traditional gold jewelry manufacturers. From this origin, the local costume jewelry industry grew from only four shops in 1805 to 27 firms in 1830, employing 290 artisans. By 1850 these numbers had doubled, reaching a high of 90 shops by 1856. Many of the shops were small operations owned by master craftsmen who were forced to return to the ranks of wage earners when sales declined as a result of changes in fashion or economic declines. The Panic of 1857 and the Civil War had just such an effect, and in 1865 only half the shops counted a decade previously were still in operation. With improved conditions the jewelry industry could revive equally dramatically. The silver industry was carried on early in the century in small shops operated by artisans such

as Jabez Gorham who made beads, earrings, rings, pins and flatware. In 1847, Gorham's son, John, greatly expanded the business by installing a steam engine and producing silverware by machine.

The Civil War triggered a full scale expansion of established manufacturers nationwide. In Providence, the base-metal industries earned profits producing rifles, steam engines, and machinery. At the same time, the war provided incentives for the rapid expansion and mechanization of industries which had developed at a slower pace before 1860. The textile industry was one of these. During the Civil War, cotton was in short supply, and some mills were forced to close though cotton production remained an important part of the state's economy. There was no shortage of wool, however, and the Atlantic Delaine, Riverside, and Wanskuck mills were three of the more prominent factories constructed during or immediately after the war which manufactured woolen goods and worsteds.

Providence's population tripled between 1830 and 1865 to a total of 54,595 residents. Of these, nearly half were foreign born or the children of foreign-born parents, an increase of 24,393 from a count of 39 unnaturalized foreigners in 1820. Immigration from England, Scotland, and English-speaking Canada was a constant supplement to Providence's population throughout the nineteenth century. These English-speaking newcomers assimilated easily and settled throughout Providence. Many were skilled textile workers. In 1865 this group totaled 4,025.

Irish immigrants represented nearly a third of the city's population. The city's first Roman Catholic parish, Saints Peter and Paul, was established in 1838, and the first St. Patrick's Day celebration was held in the City Hotel on Weybosset Street in 1839. Most Irish immigrants had been farm laborers, and they performed unskilled work in Providence such as railroad construction and earth-moving to fill the cove in 1848 before moving into factory work.

In 1865, 6,773 dwelling houses existed in Providence. The worst living conditions probably existed at Snowtown, where a large part of the town's black population lived along the north shore of the cove; in South Providence adjacent to slaughterhouses and the Rhode Island Bleachery which employed unskilled workers; at the Irish settlement, "Corky Hill," in Fox Point near the harbor; and along the Blackstone

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Canal, an industrial corridor and an open sewer. Superintendent of Health Edwin Snow recorded that nine-tenths of all who died during the 1854 Asiatic Cholera epidemic were "persons of foreign parentage," and 70 percent of all deaths occurred near the canal or at Fox Point, where there abounded "miserable, unsuitable, illy-constructed, overcrowded tenements, with no conveniences for cleanliness, or decency."

Most new construction occurred in College Hill or Fox Point, the city's oldest neighborhoods, and on the west side in the areas of downtown, northern South Providence, and eastern Federal Hill. During the first half of the nineteenth century Providence ceased to be the simple linear settlement along the river and Weybosset Street dating from colonial days. Instead, geographically and visually distinct neighborhoods began to emerge, setting a pattern for the city's future growth. The 1835 census revealed that for the first time a majority of Providence residents lived on the west side. Beyond the densely settled areas, the number of country estates proliferated, and some farms remained active.

MAKING A METROPOLIS: 1865-1945

Patterns of civic development which appeared during the first half of the nineteenth century were brought to fulfillment between 1865 and 1945. Foreign immigration continued to swell the city's population; industrial expansion made Providence one of the nation's manufacturing leaders; and a building boom constructed nearly 30,000 houses.

The transition to a peacetime economy was complicated by the Panic of 1873, more devastating than previous nationwide economic depressions because of the extent and rate of expansion during and after the Civil War. The major Rhode Island concern to fail was the A. & W. Sprague Manufacturing Company of Cranston. At the time, it was the largest business failure in the nation's history, and the Sprague failure forced Providence banks which held Sprague notes to reorganize. A few Providence manufacturing companies, including the Atlantic Delaine Company, failed as a direct result of the panic, and most were affected by the depression, resulting in mill shut-downs, short workdays, and lay-

offs over the next six years. Recovery was nearly complete by 1879, however, and the following decades brought spectacular growth, progress, and prosperity for Providence. The tone of the era was exuberantly summarized by the *Board of Trade Journal* in 1895 when it wrote: "Providence, built like Rome upon its seven hills, fanned by gentle breezes from the ocean, with its freedom from serious epidemics, its great wealth, large banking facilities, large and varied industries, its nearness to other great commercial centers, its society, schools, churches, beautiful surroundings and splendid streets, is not excelled by any other city in the U.S. for residence and business purposes."

Metals firms which had expanded dramatically during the Civil War were reorganized for peacetime production. The Burnside Rifle Company became Rhode Island Locomotive Works, and Nicholson & Brownwell, formed to produce parts for Springfield muskets, became the Nicholson File Company. By 1900, Providence was the nation's third largest manufacturer of all types of machine tools, and it was boasted that the city contained the world's largest tool factory (Brown and Sharpe, 235 Promenade Street), file factory (Nicholson File, 23 Acorn Street), engine factory (Corliss Steam Engine Company), screw factory (American Screw), and silverware factory (Gorham, 333 Adelaide Avenue).

Foundries and machine shops varied widely in size from the smallest shops, which were sometimes associated with a textile mill, to major factory complexes. Most metals firms were located in areas with access to transportation facilities which included the Woonasquatucket River corridor, Olneyville, and Moshassuck Square, which were adjacent to railroad lines, and waterfront sites in Fox Point and along Eddy Street.

Gorham Manufacturing Company moved from North Main Street to a site on the rail line at Adelaide Avenue in 1890. By the turn of the century, Providence was the nation's leading producer of silverware — over a third of all American silverware was manufactured here.

The jewelry industry rebounded rapidly from the 1873 panic. In 1875, 130 jewelry shops employed 2,700 workers, and in 1890 an expanding market for cuff and collar buttons

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and the specialization of electroplating, enameling, engraving, die sinking, and lapidary work provided work for more than 200 firms and almost 7,000 workers. By 1900, Providence ranked first in the manufacture of jewelry nationally and the state as a whole supplied 29 percent of the jewelry manufactured in the United States. The industry was centered in Providence in a jewelry manufacturing district bounded by Pine, Chestnut, Clifford and Eddy Streets. This clustering of small firms in large buildings provided some of the same advantages of scale in purchasing steam or electric power and in integrating operations which a large factory enjoyed.

The city was also the nation's leader in the production of wool and worsted goods. In 1890, Providence's wool and worsted companies employed 8,887 workers. Wool and worsted mills and cotton finishing plants such as bleaching, dyeing, and printing companies remained dependent on ample supplies of water for their operation in order to wash the raw fibers or to rinse finished products. Consequently, the Woonasquatucket, the East, and the Moshassuck Rivers, which provided both water and access to railroads, were centers for the textile industry.

Other industries contributed to Providence manufacturing as well. In 1901 there were 1,933 firms doing business in Providence, and businessmen honestly boasted that "Providence manufactures everything from a carpet-tack to a locomotive." Overall, the city of Providence produced \$200 million in manufactured goods in 1904: \$40 million in woollens and worsteds, \$26 million in cotton goods, \$17 million in jewelry and silver, \$13 million in machines, \$10 million in rubber goods, \$5 million in electrical supplies, and \$1.5 million in silk. In 1912, the city's *Board of Trade Journal* reported that Rhode Island stood second in per capita wealth in the United States.

During the second quarter of the twentieth century, Providence's industrial progress slowed as the nation's textile industry relocated from the northeast to the south. As early as the 1890s, Providence businessmen were aware of Southern gains in the textile industry; indeed, Rhode Islanders were among the important investors in Southern mills, and a

Providence millwright firm headed by engineer Frank P. Sheldon designed dozens of Southern mills. In 1880 the South produced only 1/16 of the nation's cotton goods; by 1910 it was producing almost a third; and by 1923 nearly half. A variety of causes has been suggested for New England's decline as a textile manufacturing center including climate, antiquated physical plants, and labor problems, all of which undoubtedly played a part. New England cotton profits declined alarmingly in the years 1910-1914, but the stimulus to production created by World War I helped to hide the seriousness of these problems until plants actually began to close. The bankruptcy of the Warwick firm, B.B. &

R. Knight in 1924 as well as the abandonment by the American Woolen Company of two Providence mills in 1928 dramatized the condition of Rhode Island's textile economy. During the Depression years 1929-1931, unemployment ran as high as 40 percent in major Providence industries, but declined during the next decade as the second world war stimulated industrial production.

Providence ranked twentieth in size among American cities in 1900. The city's population doubled between 1865 and 1880, and doubled again by 1910 when immigrants accounted for seven of every ten residents. To house and employ this population, the rural countryside which surrounded the city was subdivided, platted, and built up. Although Providence's growth was not consciously planned and the full consequences of its growth could not be anticipated, nonetheless, a city-wide pattern of development emerged from thousands of individual decisions to build a factory, a store or a house. Geography determined the suitability of land for residential or industrial use, and owners of large parcels determined the land's availability through price and their willingness to sell. As a result, a series of different neighborhoods was created. Fanning out in all directions, they encircled the earliest settled area of College Hill and Weybosset Neck, and were themselves encircled by an ever diminishing band of semi-rural land which reached beyond the city's borders. The neighborhoods were separated by use, social and economic stratification, location, and time of settlement. No longer was Providence a compact, functionally and socially integrated community as it had been; it was becoming a sprawling federation of industrial sections and discrete residential districts.

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At the center of Providence's trade and industry stood the downtown. Near the turn of the century, the city had 31 banks and 130 insurance offices, 16 theaters performing repertory drama, opera, vaudeville, burlesque, or the newest fad, movies. Four daily newspapers and 26 weeklies and monthlies were published, and 300 passenger and freight trains stopped in Union Station every day.

Outside of downtown, builders raced to keep up with the demand for new houses. In 1865, 6,773 dwelling houses existed in Providence. The total increased dramatically in succeeding decades: 13,275 in 1875, 20,584 in 1895, and 35,634 in 1920; only during the economic depression years, 1873-1880 and after 1929, did construction activity slacken. This building boom relied heavily on the existence of a public transit system which enabled people to live beyond walking distance from jobs and stores. During the 1860s horsecar service was inaugurated along the city's major streets. By 1882, 200 horsecars were in operation over 41 miles of tracks, and with the advent of electric trolleys, service was expanded. The benefits of trolley service were described rhapsodically in 1893: "The electric railroad is no longer an experiment. . . . it is threading the streets with steel, and cob-webbing the air with wires. It is adding suburban towns to the city centers and radiating the arteries of rapid transit from congested districts, beyond the fringes of smoke and noise to rural scenes, where, in purer air and sweeter surroundings our thousands of toilers can enjoy home and health." In 1912, 435 electric trolley cars rode 81.56 miles of track and carried more than 135 million passengers a year. Between 1920 and 1940 service was switched to buses; the last streetcar was retired in 1948.

In the late nineteenth century, the majority of Providence families shared two-family or three-family houses. Housing developments for the workers of specific mills existed in Olneyville, Smith Hill, and most clearly in the North End, where the Wanskuck Company built and owned workers' and managers' housing, a store, a recreation hall, and a church. Large sections of South Providence, Smith Hill, Valley, Fox Point, Mount Hope along North Main Street,

and the West End were built up with multiple-family dwellings intended for working and lower middle-class owners and tenants. Single family houses were also built in these neighborhoods.

Wealthier home buyers selected areas which were removed from factories, the railroad, or the harbor. All of College Hill remained popular. A number of Providence's finest residences were built along boulevards such as Broadway, Broad Street, Hope Street, and Elmwood Avenue, and slightly less grand houses were built on nearby side streets. During the 1880s and 1890s Elmwood and sections of South Providence were developed as fashionable residential districts, as were sections of the East Side near Angell and Cooke Streets.

At Providence's borders, large amounts of land remained open at the turn of the twentieth century. Cole Avenue on the East Side was still being farmed; Washington Park and southern Elmwood were the site of the Washington Park Trotting Association race track, the 30-acre Park Garden amusement park, professional baseball fields, and circus grounds; in Mount Pleasant and Elmhurst the age of country estates lingered on.

Between 1900 and 1945 housing construction filled in most of the city's remaining vacant land, completing the neighborhoods of Washington Park, Mount Pleasant, Silver Lake, and the East Side. Residents in the new areas often were families who moved from other neighborhoods in order to purchase single-family houses in a suburban setting. Since these neighborhoods were located on the city's edges, transportation, especially the automobile, was key to their development.

The first automobile ever seen in Providence appeared in 1898; it was built and owned by A.T. Cross, and its steam engine powered it along at ten miles per hour. By 1908 there were 3,500 automobiles registered in the state, and by 1911 downtown traffic jams were so common that police were assigned to direct traffic.

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Construction of Blackstone Boulevard (1892-4) on the East Side and Pleasant Valley Parkway (1909) in Mt. Pleasant spurred development and facilitated commuting in private automobiles between home and work. Garages became a standard feature in newer neighborhoods. Commercial development occurred outside of downtown during the 1920s and 1930s in new neighborhood shopping centers like Wayland Square and Hopkins Square, saving patrons the longer auto or bus ride to the city center. Similarly, major streets like North Main, Broad, Cranston, Smith, Broadway and Elmwood Avenue were easily accessible by automobile, and former residences were converted to commercial uses or were demolished to make room for stores, parking lots, and gasoline stations. Although in newer areas streets and garages were built to accommodate automobiles, in long built-up portions of the city, streets had to be widened and garages and parking areas constructed where trees and lawns had once existed.

Between 1865 and 1945, the process of urbanizing the surrounding countryside was repeated on varying schedules and with differing results in the city's neighborhoods. The people who occupied the new houses and those who moved into old houses in the less desirable sections were as varied as the neighborhoods' separate histories. During the period, Providence's total population grew by 460 percent with most of the increase occurring before 1910. The city's native white population grew from 28,452 in 1865 to 59,966 in 1910, while its foreign population in those same years rose from a count of 23,239 to 158,657. After 1924, federal immigration quotas restricted the flow of newcomers. Immigrants from Ireland and from England, Scotland, and British Canada had been a sizeable part of Providence's residents during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1910 these groups comprised 18 percent of the total and were generally dispersed throughout the city's neighborhoods.

Italian immigrants began arriving in Providence after 1885. Twenty-five years later there were 30,000 citizens of Italian parentage, and by 1930, twenty percent of the city's population was of Italian extraction — more than 50,000 persons. Two-thirds of their numbers lived on Federal Hill, and the area could only accommodate this influx in congested, overcrowded conditions. Between 1895 and 1910 significant immigrant populations settled in various areas: French

Canadians settled in Wanskuck and the West End; Russian Jews in Mount Hope, Smith Hill, and South Providence; Portuguese in Fox Point; and Swedes, Turks, and Germans settled throughout Providence in mixed neighborhoods. The residential neighborhoods least affected by immigration were College Hill, Elmwood, and lower South Providence, where middle and upper income native whites built comfortable suburban homes. Blacks, who comprised ten percent of the population in the 1820s, now constituted but 1½ percent of the populace. They lived in all neighborhoods in 1910, but were particularly concentrated in parts of College Hill and the West End.

The making of metropolitan Providence was largely a private enterprise carried out by industrialists and workers, real estate investors and home buyers, landlords and tenants. The process of growth also relied on a variety of public services. The water supply and sewerage systems were begun during the 1870s and 1880s. Electrical service began in 1882, just three years after Thomas Edison perfected a reasonably priced incandescent bulb, and by the turn of the century, electric lights, vacuum cleaners, phonographs, and sewing and washing machines were making life easier for many residents. The Providence Telephone Company was incorporated in 1879, three years after the invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell. By 1903, one hundred telephone operators were handling 49,500 calls each day.

City government became responsible for providing public services on a vastly larger scale than ever before, and the per capita city debt rocketed from \$11.82 in 1866 to \$80.06 in 1900. Part of the debt resulted from the process of land development. The private, arbitrary, and unrestrained development undertaken by landowners was criticized by Mayor Thomas A. Doyle in 1872: "Each developer is platting his own land with reference to the number of building lots he can make on his own tract, and without the slightest reference to the direction in which his streets are laid, or whether they lead into other streets. . . ." Between 1864 and 1880, the city spent \$1.2 million to reconstruct developers' streets. A zoning ordinance was not adopted by the city until 1923. With its increase in population, Providence had to organize modern police and fire protection; by 1912 there were 369 policemen and 325 firemen. New schools were needed as

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well; a total of 61 schools were constructed between 1870 and 1900. By the latter year, the four high schools, 16 grammar schools and 88 primary schools then operating employed 1,044 teachers to instruct 23,000 pupils. Public recreational space became more and more necessary as vacant land was built upon. The City Board of Park Commissioners was formed in 1901, and by 1910 it oversaw 31 parks covering 640 acres including: Roger Williams Park (1886-1910), Tockwotton Park (1896), and Neuteconkanut Hill Park (1904). In 1940 there were 27 parks, 47 playgrounds, and 2 parkways covering 1,150 acres.

In addition to serving those who lived within the city's borders as defined at the time of incorporation in 1832, the municipal government became responsible for large areas which were reannexed from Cranston, Johnston, and North Providence between 1868 and 1919. Portions of the East Side, Mount Hope, Elmwood, South Providence, and the West End, and most of Washington Park, Silver Lake, the North End, and Mount Pleasant were acquired in this manner. In general, the reannexed areas had more in common with Providence in terms of economic and neighborhood development and ethnicity than with their former towns.

World War II represented the last boom period for industrial Providence. Production activity occasioned by wartime demand aided economic recovery after the Depression. Old Providence firms which benefited included textile mills such as the Atlantic and Wanskuck mills, which manufactured uniforms; U.S. Rubber, which manufactured thirty-six million rubber heels for shoes and combat boots; and Brown & Sharpe, which manufactured a variety of machine tools. Newer firms with defense industry contracts included Atlantic Rayon Company (founded by Royal Little in 1928), which gained large profits manufacturing rayon parachutes. At the city's Field's Point waterfront, Rheem Shipbuilding Company built sixty-four ships for war service. The construction of naval facilities at Quonset Point, Davisville, and Newport meant contracts for local businesses, and Providence became popular with sailors on liberty. Thus the civic and industrial growth which Providence enjoyed in the decades following the Civil War was partially revived during World War II despite underlying economic weaknesses.

THE RECENT PAST: 1945-1985

Between 1945 and 1985 Providence did not enjoy the growth and prosperity which characterized the preceding century. The city's population declined by 40 percent. During the single decade 1950 to 1960, Providence lost 17 percent of its population, leading the nation in this statistic, and a number of formerly important businesses closed or moved away. New development was affected by the fact that little vacant land remained in the city, and new construction could occur only in the suburbs beyond the city limits or on land which first had to be cleared of old buildings. The widespread ownership of automobiles and the construction of improved highways facilitated movement out of the city to new houses, office parks, and shopping centers in surrounding suburban communities.

The erosion of Providence's industrial economic base was a gradual process in which the relocation or failure of individual companies accumulated by the middle of the century to form an evident downward trend. The post-war period began with war industries closing down and returning servicemen adding to the unemployed, who numbered 35,000 statewide at the end of 1945. Plants were closed by Wanskuck Company, Atlantic Mills, and American Silk Spinning Company, while others relocated: American Screw Company (1949 to Willimantic, Connecticut), Nicholson File Company (1959 to East Providence and Indiana), and Brown and Sharpe Manufacturing Company (1964 to North Kingstown). Statewide employment in textiles declined 58 percent between 1947 and 1960; employment declined 20 percent in metals and machinery industries and increased 2 percent in jewelry. The success of firms like Gorham and Textron Corporation, one of the nation's first conglomerates, could not balance industrial failures.

Compounding its loss of businesses and jobs, the city's older areas experienced urban decay. Eighty percent of all housing units existing in Providence in 1980 had been built before 1940, while only five percent of the city's total dated after 1960. Many large houses were subdivided into apartments, and the number of rented housing units soared. Of 41,000 units constructed before 1940, only 8,000 were occupied by their owners in 1980. With a few exceptions, the older a neighborhood, the higher its proportion of rented units was, and a pattern of neglect of property by absentee landlords began to appear.

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Providence's main effort to improve its economic base and to combat urban decay began in 1947 with the creation of the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA). At that time eight areas of "arrested development" were designated on the fringes of the city where streets remained unpaved and water and sewage lines had never been completed, and nine "dilapidated" center city areas were designated for clearance of blight and for renewal. The federal government provided two-thirds or three-quarters of project funds with the remainder supplied locally.

Over a thirty-year period, the PRA exercised control or direct influence over approximately one-quarter of Providence's land area. Some 1,845 buildings were demolished to clear 279 acres of land. A total of \$250 million in new construction was undertaken; 2500 housing units were built in projects such as University Heights, Wiggins Village, and Weybosset Hill; 20,000 new jobs were created by firms locating in the West River and Huntington industrial parks, at Randall Square, and elsewhere. The PRA also oversaw construction of 5 schools, street reconstruction, and other public improvements. Programs to assist property owners to rehabilitate existing houses were administered by the PRA in Federal Hill, the West End, Fox Point, College Hill, and Mount Hope.

Although construction of Interstate Highway 95 and the PRA's clearance of deteriorated areas removed significant portions of Providence's historic architecture, historic preservation has been an element in the city's planning. In 1959 the City Plan Commission and the Providence Preservation Society cooperated with the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to publish *College Hill, a demonstration study of historic area renewal*. The study documented the historical and architectural significance of the College Hill area and presented planning recommendations for rehabilitating the existing but severely deteriorated buildings in the area. Some of the recommendations were incorporated into the East Side Urban Renewal Plan, while the basic work of repairing houses was undertaken by private homeowners who agreed with the preservation program. Residents in other parts of the city also have embraced historic preservation, and many historic properties throughout Providence have been renovated for continued liveability.

During the 1970s, an increasing number of commercial and industrial buildings underwent rehabilitation. The South Main Street commercial district, part of College Hill and an urban renewal area, included some of the first commercial restorations in Providence. Since the enactment of federal tax incentives in 1976 for renovation of commercial properties which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 122 projects have been completed, particularly downtown and in former industrial areas where old mills and factories have been converted to light manufacturing, retail, office, restaurant, or residential uses. From 1976 to 1984, the total investment in such projects was \$89 million.

Important new construction projects have been undertaken privately and with government assistance in all neighborhoods as well. Yet, Providence's economy has not recovered from the loss of manufacturing employment, and the city continues to lose population and business to the suburbs.

Industrial sector declines may be offset by increases in service occupations; a statewide trend is suggested by the increase in service employment from approximately half of Rhode Island workers in 1960 to 63 percent today. Development of new office space in downtown Providence could encourage this sector of the economy, and plans have been prepared to construct as much as 3.5 million square feet of offices in the Capital Center development project on the northern edge of downtown over the next twenty years.

Providence remains a city largely constructed in the nineteenth century. The area of colonial settlement on College Hill is a nationally recognized historic district of restored houses and public buildings. The downtown contains a remarkably intact collection of office and commercial buildings dating from 1860 to 1940, while the city's other 17 neighborhoods reveal their individual histories in their housing, factories, parks, and other features. Many of the most severely deteriorated and antiquated buildings in the city were removed through urban renewal, and the remaining well constructed and attractive buildings are an economic and visual asset, though many still need renovation. Providence's neighborhoods are small communities within a large metropolis where diverse ethnic and social customs enrich daily life. By 1970 the mix of foreign to native parentage had declined from 70 percent as in 1910 to 26 percent.

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The largest immigrant groups in 1970 were Italians (10 percent of the city's population) and Irish (3 percent). Blacks, who comprised only 1.5 percent of city residents in 1910, totaled 12 percent or 18,546 in the 1980 census, approximating this group's representation in Providence in the early nineteenth century. Hispanics who only recently have been counted as a significant population group, accounted for 6 percent of Providence's 1980 total. The city's most recent immigrant group, southeast Asians, accounts for one percent of the population.

In 1986 Providence is celebrating its 350th anniversary. As the City's residents look back over three and a half centuries of achievement and change, work is already underway to transform the center of the city by reclaiming the waterfront. The Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket rivers will be realigned and excess pavement decking will be removed, thereby opening up new Providence River views and allowing public access along its banks. This riverfront renewal, the neighboring revitalization of the historic Downtown, the development of Capital Center, and the ongoing preservation of College Hill and other neighborhoods are healthy proof of the City's vigor. In Providence's next 350 years, its heritage will continue to be used as a resource for new growth.

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type Ecclesiastical Buildings (Roman Catholic parish churches and church complexes)

II. Description

III. Significance

IV. Registration Requirements

☒ See continuation sheet

☐ See continuation sheet for additional property types

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

☒ See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

See:

Wm McKenzie Woodward and Edward F. Sanderson, Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources, Providence: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (1986).

☐ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency

- ☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

I. Form Prepared By Edward F. Sanderson, Historian, Wm McKenzie Woodward, Arch.
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II. Physical and Associative Characteristics

Description

Between 1850 and 1930, over 20 Catholic parish churches were constructed in Providence, as the city's population expanded rapidly through immigration. Immigrants came from several different countries: first from Ireland, then later from Italy and Canada and other countries--but many of them shared a common religion, Roman Catholicism. By the turn of the century the vast number of immigrants made Roman Catholicism the predominant religion in Providence.

Most of these churches used the medieval prototypes advocated by A.W.N. Pugin in England and by Eugene-Emanuel Viollet-le-Duc in France. The liturgical demands of Roman Catholicism as well as the traditions of peoples from various homelands made for a lively and varied architecture for their houses of worship. While Protestant churches in Providence generally retained the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century English parish church as a basic prototype, Roman Catholic churches looked to a longer and broader tradition of ecclesiastical architecture often--but not necessarily--based in the heritage of their parishes.

The first Roman Catholic churches built in Providence were only tentatively Gothic. Sts. Peter and Paul (1838), Westminster Street, and St. Patrick's (1842; Russell Warren, architect), State Street, were rough stone buildings covered with smooth stucco. St. Patrick's was built with more or less Greek Revival proportions, including a low-gable roof, with Gothic details on the facade.

The first fully realized Gothic Revival Roman Catholic church in Providence was designed by an Irish-born architect for a largely Irish-born congregation. Patrick C. Keeley, the son of an architect/builder, had studied with Pugin and had exposure to medieval architecture and training in the Gothic mode. Keeley immigrated to New York in 1841, and from his Brooklyn office designed approximately five hundred churches. In 1851, work began from his designs for St. Joseph's Church (completed 1853), 86 Hope Street, a random-course-ashlar brownstone structure

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patterned on British Gothic prototypes, with a crocketed entrance tower. St. Joseph's is a fine and impressive building; upon its completion, the Providence Daily Journal reported "The style of the building is Gothic, after the Pugin manner. It is one of the largest, most substantial, and beautiful in the city, and is an ornament to the section where it stands." The stylish Gothic mode must have also appealed in a more fundamental way to its parishioners, most of them recent immigrants from Ireland.

A similar essay in the Gothic Revival, also for an Irish parish, is St. Mary's Church (1864-1901; James Murphy, architect), 538 Broadway. Like St. Joseph's, it is a large building of rugged stone construction, but it is more picturesquely massed, with a square entrance tower on one corner and a spired turret at rear.

Because of the growing number of Roman Catholics in Rhode Island, Providence was designated an independent diocese in 1872 with Sts. Peter and Paul as the episcopal seat. The 1838 church was not large enough to serve the needs of the diocese, and construction on a cathedral began in 1878. P.C. Keeley, by this time the pre-eminent designer of Roman Catholic churches in the east, was engaged for the new building, just as he was for the cathedrals in Buffalo, Chicago, Boston, Hartford, and Portland. The cruciform-plan cathedral was constructed of rough-hewn sandstone, like his earlier St. Joseph's, but its design was an emphatic departure from that church or earlier Roman Catholic churches in Providence. Massive twin towers dominate the facade, and a large rose window set within a lancet arch fills the pedimented center section. In plan and form, the cathedral owes a considerable debt to French Gothic sources, but the handling of its surface and its articulation are reminiscent of twelfth- and thirteenth-century north Italian buildings, particularly in the machicolated towers; the influence of H.H. Richardson's work may also be seen here.

Construction of the cathedral took eleven years, and by the time of its completion in 1889, new ethnic groups had begun to comprise the larger components of the Roman Catholic population in Providence. This shift was visually manifested in the new churches they built. For a French Canadian parish in northwest Providence, James Murphy designed St. Edward's Church (1889), 991

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Branch Avenue. The influence of French Gothic is particularly evident in the verticality of the building's massing. St. Michael's Church (1891-1915; Murphy, Hindle & Wright, architects), 251 Oxford Street, is constructed of red brick with an extremely large, square tower centered on the facade; built for the largest Irish parish in the state, it relates closely in form and style to contemporary Roman Catholic churches then a-building in England and Ireland. The Church of the Assumption (1910-12; Murphy, Hindle & Wright, architects), 805 Potters Avenue, uses a French Gothic motif like St. Edward's, but the association is more clear in the use of paired towers asymmetrically handled: the west tower has a crenellated belfry, while the east tower stops abruptly just below the peak of the end-gable roof.

Gothic and Romanesque revival styles continued to enjoy favor as appropriate settings for Roman Catholic worship well into the twentieth century, but they lost their absolute predominance here around the turn of the century. The emerging use of various historic Italian architectural styles depended in varying degrees upon several circumstances: Italy, and Rome in particular, as the home of the Roman Catholic Church, possess many of the earliest and most important Christian ecclesiastical buildings. The so-called American Renaissance at the end of the nineteenth century brought renewed attention to monumental, classicizing buildings. On a more local note, Italian immigrants began to settle in Providence in significant numbers, and the new Italian congregations increasingly chose to build churches reflecting their ethnic heritage.

The earliest of these Italian prototype churches is the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus (896-1900; Ambrose J. Murphy, architect) on Camp Street. Its composition is derived from the medieval Italian basilica: a two-story nave flanked by one-story shed-roof aisles and with a campanile placed toward the eastern end of the building. The use of an Italian prototype for a predominantly Irish parish was unusual but readily explained: the pastor knew first-hand early Christian buildings in Italy and wanted to use these as models. The building was much admired at the time of its dedication. The Providence Visitor, the newspaper of the Roman Catholic diocese, noted in September of 1900 that the church "as a piece of architecture, is unique

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hereabouts...beautiful in its simple lines." At the same time, the Providence Daily Journal recommended the "classic beauty of the interior as a whole, its purity of tone and the utter absence of tawdriness in coloring and decoration."

The Church of the Blessed Sacrament (1899-1905; Heins & LaFarge of New York, architects), Academy Avenue at Regent Avenue, follows the Italian basilica format, here rendered in red brick, terra cotta, and brownstone in a manner reminiscent of Romanesque Lombardy; windows in the church are by the architect's father, John LaFarge, the pre-eminent American stained-glass designer. C. Grant LaFarge, who designed a number of Roman Catholic churches in various styles, firmly believed that "Catholicism and catholicity go hand in hand."

The basilica plan with campanile, following medieval Italian prototypes, enjoyed considerable popularity during the first three decades of the twentieth century in both Italian and non-Italian parishes. St. Ann's Church (1910; Murphy, Hindle & Wright, architects), Hawkins at Charles Streets, is the most highly imitative of Tuscan Romanesque sources, with an elaborately articulated polychrome exterior. Our Lady of Mount Carmel (1925; John F. O'Malley, architect), Dean Street at Atwells Avenue, continued the format and polychrome decoration; it represents the end of this tradition at its most fully articulated. Both of these churches were built for Italian parishes. For the Polish parish church of St. Adelbert's (1925; Ernest Ludorff of Bridgeport, Connecticut, architect), 860 Atwells Avenue, colored brick was used for a patterned polychrome effect on the facade and flanking campanile, but the building's massing is more restrained than that of earlier buildings in this mode. The largely French parish of Our Lady of Lourdes (1928; Ambrose J. Murphy, architect), 901 Atwells Avenue, built an even simpler church than St. Adelbert's, with ornamentation limited chiefly to recessed panels at the top of the facade.

The few modern Roman Catholic churches in Providence follow a traditional format. St. Pius (1960-62), [230] Eaton Street, has a campanile, though its form and that of the church are "updated." St. Augustine (1962) on Mount Pleasant Avenue has a high nave with its gable end toward the street. While modern in style, both buildings show the lingering of traditional

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ecclesiastical forms that had been established here in the nineteenth century.

A special subset of the property type should be noted: the parish complex. The addition of auxiliary buildings to a Roman Catholic parish church is characteristic of the building patterns of Catholic immigrant parishes. Schools, rectories, convents, and parish halls were often clustered near the church, often filling a whole or partial city block. Where such auxiliary buildings exist and are associated with an eligible church, it is expected that they will be nominated as well. It is not expected that the church and its auxiliary buildings will necessarily date from the same period; parishes often built their complex's elements in succession as resources and needs altered.

Geographical Information

Representative examples of this property type are, with some notable exceptions, located on the western side of Providence in the residential neighborhoods where immigrant communities were clustered. There are especially dense concentrations of this type in the Federal Hill and North End neighborhoods, reflecting the concentration of immigrants in these areas.

Predicted Boundaries:

Examples of this property type are, for the most part, located in densely developed urban neighborhoods and are closely surrounded by development. It is expected that the boundaries of examples to be nominated will include the city lots on which they stand and will reflect the historic boundaries of the church-owned land.

III. Significance

Providence's Roman Catholic churches are significant for their association with and for their ability to document the presence of large ethnic immigrant communities in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century history of the city; these churches are physical documents which reveal information

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about the historical issues of nationality, ethnicity, assimilation, and cultural diversity (Criterion A). Parish complexes (church and auxiliary buildings) document an important aspect of the history of the city's immigrant communities--the several functions, beyond the exclusively religious, which a parish played in the lives of its members. In addition, many of these parish churches are typical or fine examples of church architecture; some are the masterworks of architects of national or regional renown (Criterion C). Parish churches and complexes may also qualify for the Register as contributing components of larger districts (Criteria A & C).

Criterion A: Area of Significance--Ethnic Heritage

The expansion of Providence's industrial capacity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was paralleled by the city's growing population, growth which resulted principally from an influx of European and Canadian immigrants. Drawn by the opportunity to work in the city's mills, large communities of Irish, Canadians, Italians, Poles, Portuguese, and others settled in Providence, where their presence altered the social and political fabric of the city. Many of these immigrants settled in ethnically cohesive neighborhoods where familiar language and customs were maintained.

Historically and architecturally, the significant legacy of these ethnic immigrant communities is best documented by the Catholic churches they built. For these immigrant communities, the parish church was the institutional center of neighborhood life. Isolated from the larger community, at least temporarily, by barriers of language and culture, Providence's immigrants created a social and cultural center for their civic lives in their parish churches and complexes.

Despite their common Catholicism, the differences among immigrant communities were substantial; in language, culture, economic and political ideals, there were significant differences among the Irish, Italians, French Canadians, Poles, and Portuguese. The institutional response to these differences on the part of the diocesan hierarchy was the creation of national parishes: churches which served members of a single ethnic

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group, with pastors of their own nationality, who were civic and cultural leaders as well as religious.

The parish complexes of Providence have special significance. The addition of such auxiliary buildings as schools, convents, rectories, and parish halls to the areas near churches produced the characteristic complex, with the church as the centerpiece of a collection of buildings which represents the several roles of a Catholic church in the lives of its parishioners.

Criterion A: Area of Significance--Art

Some of Providence's Catholic churches contain handsome stained glass windows. Such windows may have significance in the history of art.

Criterion C: Area of Significance--Architecture

Providence's Catholic churches are significant for their ability to exemplify periods, styles, and types in church construction; in their size, scale, and beauty, many are the principal architectural monuments of their neighborhoods. The city's historic Catholic churches range in date from the 1850s through the 1920s and represent, in style, varying and successive ideals of suitable models for Catholic worship, especially the Gothic and Romanesque Revival.

Churches in a district--Apart from their individual significance, Catholic churches can make a contribution to the sense of time and place in an eligible historic district. In Providence, where such churches are usually located in densely developed, characteristically urban residential neighborhoods, Catholic churches may be important architectural features of their areas and add to the historic associations and feeling of the place.

Other Criteria--It is possible that some representatives of this type may be eligible under other criteria or areas of significance, in addition to these identified here. Catholic parish churches and complexes have been studied to a sufficient degree to evaluate their historic significance as products of

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immigrant communities and as architecture. Other aspects of their possible significance have not yet been the subject of professional evaluation. For example, the student of modern parish churches does not have available a comprehensive history of Catholicism in the state. Conley and Smith's Catholicism in Rhode Island (Providence: Diocese of Providence, 1976) does an admirable task of outlining the early institutional and social history of Rhode Island's Catholics, but it is limited to the nineteenth century. Further research and evaluation may reveal additional significance for some churches included in this type: for example, association with individuals important in the history of the city and/or Church (Criterion B).

Criteria Considerations

Buildings used for religious purposes are among the properties ordinarily excluded from the National Register, except when their primary significance is architectural or historical. Under this multiple property submission, Roman Catholic churches will be nominated for their ability to document one of the broad patterns of Providence's history, the creation of immigrant communities and their development of institutional centers to serve their particular cultural requirements, and for their architectural quality. Most of the eligible representatives of this property type are still in use for religious purposes and would ordinarily be excluded from Register listing; however, they are nominated for their historical and architectural significance.

Level of Evaluation

Examples of this property type will be evaluated in a local context. The Rhode Island Historic Preservation Plan establishes contexts for evaluation whose spatial component for historic above-ground resources is determined by municipal and neighborhood boundaries. Most properties are thus evaluated in a local context and are measured against other similar properties within city or neighborhood boundaries (see Rhode Island Historic Preservation Plan, 1989).

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Known Related Properties

Sixteen Providence properties of this type have been recorded. Additional properties of the type are known but have not yet been recorded and evaluated. Of the sixteen recorded examples, six have been listed in the National Register (marked with *).

*St. Joseph's Church
86 Hope Street
1851-53, 1898
Patrick C. Keeley (church)
Martin & Hall (parish house)

*St. Mary's Church
538 Broadway
1864-1901
James Murphy

St. John's Church
352 Atwells Avenue
1871

*St. Edward's Church
979-999 Branch Avenue
1889-1907
James Murphy

*St. Michael's Church
251 Oxford Street
1891-1915
Martin & Hall (church)
Murphy, Hindle & Wright (interior)
Ambrose J. Murphy (rectory, school)

Holy Name Church
99-109 Camp Street
1896-1900, 1929, 1939
Ambrose J. Murphy (church)
O'Malley & Fitzsimmons (rectory, school)

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Church of the Blessed Sacrament
169-171 Academy Avenue
1897-1905
Heins & Lafarge

Church of the Holy Ghost
470 Atwells Avenue
1901
Murphy, Hindle & Wright

*Holy Rosary Church
221 Traverse Street
1905
Murphy, Hindle & Wright

St. Ann's Church
280 Hawkins Street
1910
Murphy, Hindle & Wright

Church of the Assumption
805 Potters Avenue
1910-12
Murphy, Hindle & Wright

*St. Charles Borromeo Church
178 Dexter Street
1915
Walter Fontaine

St. Sebastian's Church
39-57 Cole
1916
Ambrose J. Murphy (church)

St. Adelbert's Church
860 Atwells Avenue
1925
Ernest Ludorff

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IV. Registration Requirements

1. Integrity: In general, to be eligible for the Register, a Catholic parish church must retain sufficient integrity to illustrate in physical form its significance. Integrity of location is required for all eligible properties in this type. Integrity of characteristic setting is expected and will enhance significance, but is not required. Examples of this type will be considered sufficiently well preserved to meet the registration requirements if they retain in their exterior form, materials, and design their original appearance. Minor alterations to the exterior are expected, but an eligible church will retain all of its identifying characteristics. On the interior, eligible churches will retain substantial integrity. It is expected that some interior alterations will have taken place in eligible churches, especially in the sanctuary area. The architectural changes to Catholic church interiors encouraged by the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s and 1970s are common in recorded examples of this type. General simplifications of interior finishes, removal of the altar rail, and movement of the altar table forward from the back wall of the sanctuary are expected and will not necessarily exclude representatives of this type from the Register eligibility, unless the original design intent of the church's interior architecture can no longer be easily read. The integrity of any church may be enhanced by the presence of original furnishings, but this is not a requirement.

For parish complexes, it is expected that the original physical relationship of a church to its auxiliary buildings will be preserved and that all of the components of a complex will be generally well preserved on their exterior; in form, scale, and materials, existing buildings will represent the historic appearance of the complex. Interior alterations of auxiliary buildings are to be expected, especially to interior finishes, but sometimes to floor plans as well. Such alterations will be documented but will not necessarily exclude a parish complex from listing.

2. Associative qualities and physical characteristics: To be eligible for the Register under Criterion A, a parish church or complex will exhibit in its history an aspect of the history of immigration to Providence, of the development of immigrant

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communities in the city, of the role of nationality and ethnicity in the history of the city, or of the significant relationship of the church to its local community, and the larger society.

To be eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, a church or complex will be a typical or fine example of church and church-related architecture. When a church is nominated as a typical example of a larger group, the nomination will identify the group and explain how the nominated example typifies the class. When a church is nominated as an unusually fine example of church architecture, the nomination will demonstrate the superior architectural value of the church, distinguishing it from others by its greater beauty and sophistication.

A church or church complex may be a contributing element of a larger district. As important components of a community which developed over time, a church or complex may make a contribution to the historic character of a district, even if it is not individually eligible. To make such a contribution, a church must have been constructed during the district's period of significance.

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Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The survey of Providence's historic resources was begun in 1969 and substantially completed in 1986. The survey was undertaken by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. Supplemental survey work and updating the survey have been undertaken in the years since 1986. A preliminary archeological survey has been completed.

The Providence survey is part of the Historical Preservation Commission's on-going effort to prepare a statewide inventory of sites, buildings, districts, and objects important to Rhode Island's history and pre-history. The products of the survey--survey sheets, published survey report, and maps--are valuable resources for local, state, and federal planning. They identify the resources which should be taken into consideration when projects are undertaken which may affect them.

The Commission's surveys include four phases of work: field survey, preparation of maps, historical research, and preparation of a final preservation report. A standard survey form, which includes historical, pre-historical, and architectural/physical information and an identifying photograph, is prepared for each site, building, or object included in the survey. Historical information is obtained through the use of historic maps, published and unpublished histories, guide-books, manuscripts, newspapers and periodicals, deed research, census materials, and local and state records, as well as from knowledgeable local residents.

Essential data is transferred from the survey forms to survey maps which indicate location, style or period, map number, and architectural and historical ratings. Detailed maps for areas of special interest and density have also been prepared. In addition, properties on the National Register or which appear to be eligible are entered on the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Department's computerized mapping system (RIGIS) to insure that data is widely available.

The preservation report is based on the field survey and on additional historical research. Its core is a comprehensive history which focuses on the physical development of the city, from the time of aboriginal inhabitation to the present, as revealed in

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the city's present morphology, topography, and natural setting, as well as in such physical evidence of human settlement as roads, neighborhoods, industrial and commercial centers, and individual buildings. The fieldwork, research, and narrative provide the municipal context for evaluation of properties for National Register eligibility.

The preservation report and the recommendations it includes were reviewed by local planning officials; knowledgeable local residents; planners at state agencies, including the Department of Environmental Management and the Statewide Planning Department; and by Commission members and staff. Upon publication of the report, a copy of all survey material is placed on public file at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission's office. This set of materials includes the completed survey forms, a copy of the survey map, and the final report.

The survey was conducted by qualified historians, architectural historians, and archeologists. Nominations for listing in the National Register are reviewed by the Rhode Island Review Board.

Historic contexts are defined by the process outlined in the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Plan (1989). The typology of properties (only one part of a single property type is identified and evaluated here) is based on historic function; a standard list of 21 property types is used throughout the state and for all contexts. Other aspects of this property type (Protestant churches, synagogues) in Providence may be evaluated in the future. The requirements for integrity are based on actual knowledge of the condition of a majority of representatives of the type.