Order 77-15/16
Postponed to 10/19/2015: 7-0 (Costa recused, Mavodones absent) on 10/5/2015
Postponed to 11/2/2015: 8-0 (Costa recused) on 10/19/2015
Passage: 8-0 (Costa recused) on 11/2/2015 Effective 11/12/2015

MICHAEL F. BRENNAN (MAYOR)
KEVIN J. DONOGHUE (1)
DAVID A. MARSHALL (2)
EDWARD J. SUSLOVIC (3)
JUSTIN COSTA (4)

CITY OF PORTLAND
IN THE CITY COUNCIL

DAVID H. BRENERMAN (5)
JILL C. DUSON (A/L)
JON HINCK (A/L)
NICHOLAS M. MAVODONES, JR (A/L)

ORDER ADOPTING INDIA STREET SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AND AMENDING THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ORDERED, that the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan, attached hereto as Attachment A, is hereby adopted; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the City's Comprehensive Plan is hereby amended to include the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan.

ATTACHMENT A

India Street

Sustainable Neighborhood Plan

Portland, Maine

—

Draft recommended by Planning Board, January 2015

Portland Starts Here . . .

Vision for India Street (at Middle Street) Image Credit: Richardson & Associates, Saco, ME

[Insert City Council Order as Passed adopting plan]

Acknowledgments

The India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan has been a widely collaborative effort over the course of two years. This report was shaped and informed by many participants who deserve recognition for their efforts, including the India Street Neighborhood Association, Sustain Southern Maine, the India Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee and associated Working Groups, and of course, the community businesses, residents, workers, organizations, institutions, and developers. Especially critical to the formulation of this neighborhood plan is Hugh Nazor, president of the India Street Neighborhood Association. Without his ceaseless efforts to bring attention to the neighborhood, this Plan would not exist.

In 2013, Portland became a participating city in the Urban Sustainability Accelerator (USA) technical assistance grant through Portland State University, Oregon, which is funded through the Summit Foundation, Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning, Institute for Sustainable Solution at Portland State University, and the participating cities. Special thanks to Robert Liberty for his enthusiastic support and valuable resources provided through the course of this program. Especially valuable was the consulting work of Michele Reeves, Civilis Consulting, Portland, Oregon.

The India Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee convened in the fall of 2013 to guide the neighborhood plan development. City Councilor Kevin Donoghue and neighborhood resident and emeritus professor at the Muskie School of Public Service Richard Barringer graciously offered their time as co-chairs to this Council-appointed committee. Nineteen members were appointed to this group with wide-ranging expertise and areas of insight; without their time and efforts this plan would not have reached its successful conclusion. Many active and enthusiastic members of the community volunteered to participate in Working Groups in order to brainstorm, strategize, and craft recommendations for the final plan. Many thanks again to all of these members of the India Street and greater Portland community who gave of their time and expertise to craft this plan.

Additional resources and support were provided by key neighborhood organizations. One central to this process was the Portland Society for Architecture which hosted meetings, provided professional advice and collaboration, and financial resources that were especially crucial in the City's participation in the USA technical assistance grant and the subsequent consulting services of Michele Reeves. The Maine Jewish Museum generously provided for the use of their facilities throughout the course of the planning process. Professor Yuseung Kim of USM's Muskie School of Public Service and the students in his Planning Workshops made significant contributions to our work with the creation of a 3d model of the neighborhood and the study, *Portland Starts Here: India Street Neighborhood Recommendations*, available at http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1114/India-Street

It must be noted that many dedicated City staff members orchestrated and ushered along this complex process. Recognition is due to Planning Division Director Alex Jaegerman, Senior Planner Bill Needelman (who has since become the Waterfront Coordinator), Urban Designer Caitlin Cameron, and Historic Preservation Program Manager Deb Andrews who led the effort. Additional support was provided by Mary Davis, Housing and Community Development Division Director, Nelle Hanig, Business Programs Manager, Bruce Hyman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Coordinator, and Doug Roncarati, Stormwater Program Coordinator.

India Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee

Richard Barringer, Co-Chair
Councilor Kevin Donoghue, Co-Chair
Hilary Bassett
Beth Boepple
Carol De Tine
Tom Federle
Bethany Field
Arthur Fink
Ani Helmick
Bobbi Keppel
Alan Kuniholm
Ethan Boxer Macomber
Joe Malone
Brandon Mazer
Linda Murnik
Hugh Nazor
Arlin Smith
Timothy Wilson
Kara Wooldrik

City Council

Michael Brennan, Mayor
Kevin Donoghue, District 1
David Marshall, District 2
Edward Suslovic, District 3
Justin Costa, District 4
David Brenerman, District 5
Jill Duson, At Large
Jon Hinck, At Large
Nicholas Mavodones, At Large

Planning Board

Stuart O'Brien, Chair
Elizabeth Boepple, Vice Chair
David Eaton
Sean Dundon
Bill Hall
Carol Morrissette
Jack Soley

Historic Preservation Board

Scott Benson, Chair
Bruce Wood, Vice Chair
Penny Pollard
John Turk
Ted Oldham
Julia Sheridan
Glen Harmon

Working Groups

Land Development/ Form-based code
Staff: Caitlin Cameron, Alex Jaegerman
Consultants: Stephanie Carver, GPCOG, and Ken Studtmann, Richardson & Associates
Elizabeth Boepple
Carol De Tine
Tom Federle
Arthur Fink
Alan Kuniholm
Brandon Mazer
Hugh Nazor
Jay Waterman

Historic Preservation
Staff: Deb Andrews
Consultant: Julie Larry, Turk Tracey & Larry Architects
Hilary Bassett
Pamela Cummings
Ed Gardner
Ani Helmick
Joe Malone
Linda Murnik

Infrastructure/ Landscape Planning
Staff: Caitlin Cameron
Jennifer Claster
Bobbi Keppel
Kara Wooldrik

Equity/ Housing
Staff: Mary Davis, Alex Jaegerman
Councilor Kevin Donoghue
Jill Danaher
Bethany Field
David Loranger
Ethan Boxer Macomber

Economy
Staff: Nelle Hanig, Alex Jaegerman
Consultant: Michele Reeves, Civilis Consulting
Richard Barringer
Rachelle Curran
Susie Kendeigh
Brandon Mazer
Hugh Nazor
Arlin Smith
Tim Wilson

City of Portland, Maine

Department of Planning and Urban Development
Jeff Levine, Department Head
Alex Jaegerman, Planning Division Director
Caitlin Cameron, Urban Designer
Deb Andrews, Historic Preservation Manager
Mary Davis, Housing and Community Development Division Director
Bruce Hyman, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Coordinator

Department of Economic Development
Nelle Hanig, Business Programs Manager

Department of Public Works
Doug Roncarati, Stormwater Program Coordinator

Sustain Southern Maine

Rebeccah Schaffner, Program Manager, GPCOG
Carol Morris, President, Morris Communications
Evan Richert, Town Planner, Richert Planning
Todd Richardson, Landscape Architect, Richardson & Associates

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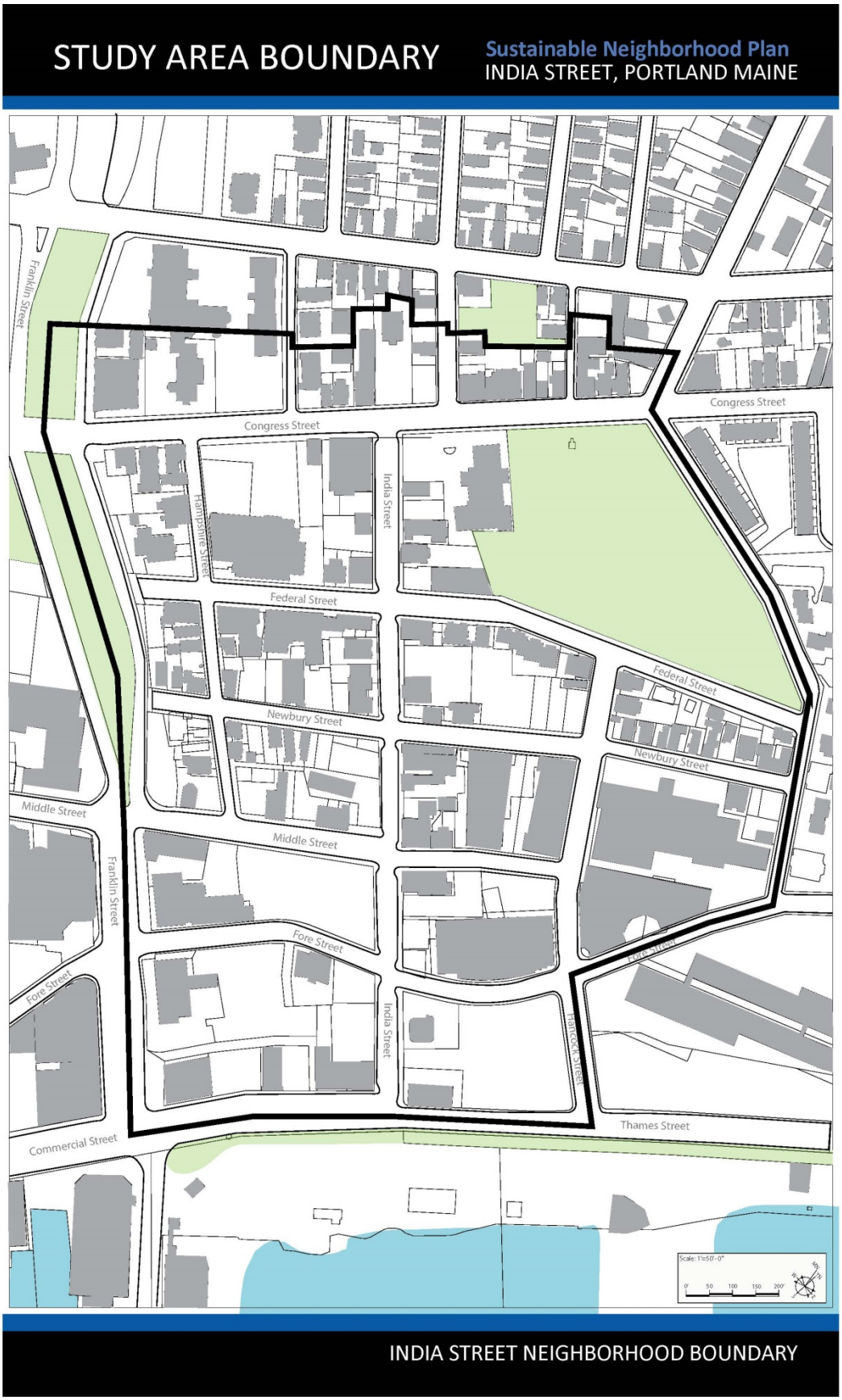

STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
Sustainable Neighborhood Plan
INDIA STREET, PORTLAND MAINE
Franklin Street
Congress Street
Congress Street
India Street
Hampshire Street
Federal Street
Federal Street
Newbury Street
Newbury Street
Middle Street
Middle Street
Franklin Street
Fore Street
Fore Street
Fore Street
India Street
Hancock Street
Thames Street
Commercial Street
Scale: 1"=50'-0"
0' 50 100 150 200'
INDIA STREET NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY

Background – The Planning Process

The India Street neighborhood is situated on the burgeoning Portland peninsula, a beautiful waterside location nestled between the Old Port and Munjoy Hill. As explained below, this area was the nucleus of the birth of Portland as a colonial city, and the City has grown up around India Street. In the years following 2010, this area began to experience development as the recession gradually gave way to resurgent growth. Many large projects were proposed pre-recession that did not come to fruition, and several sizable projects – two hotels, a parking garage, and housing , to name a few – were constructed that began to change the face of this neighborhood. Heavily influenced by downtown and the waterfront, India Street emerged as a magnet for new development, and the community responded with a request for focused planning to guide the future of the area, lest the market forces bring about change that many observers and residents feared would be of a scale and character that does not reflect the community's aspirations.

Community leaders approached the City with this concern, that planning has focused all around this neighborhood, along the waterfront, and in the downtown, but not on this neighborhood as a distinct place, to explore its character and establish a vision for its growth and development. An effort to address the specific issue of building heights along India Street was considered by the Planning Board in June of 2012, and led to the recognition that a comprehensive planning initiative was the more appropriate approach to take. The Planning Office was charged with leading this effort, in partnership with the India Street Neighborhood Association. This planning process has proceeded in two phases.

The first phase began in earnest in January, 2013, with the selection of the India Street neighborhood as a *Center of Opportunity* within the Sustain Southern Maine (SSM) regional planning program, a consortium of Cumberland and York County communities that came together with funding from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development to create a sustainable growth plan for the region. India Street was selected as a pilot community that represents opportunities for regional growth to occur in established urban centers as a strategy to combat sprawl and revitalize our city centers. With a small planning grant from SSM through the Greater Portland Council of Governments, we engaged with the India Street community to create a vision for the India Street neighborhood. Highlights of this effort included a Public Open House at the Jewish Heritage Museum in March, 2013, followed by a day-long workshop of three stakeholder small groups in April, 2013, to convert the ideas from the Open House in to neighborhood planning concepts. This input was then synthesized by the planning and consulting team into a series of reports and nine graphic products presenting an emergent neighborhood vision, form, transportation, street systems, landscape, and open space. These were presented in two public forums in June, and later in September, 2013.

Emerging Vision: Sustain Southern Maine Conceptual Plan - June, 2013

The fall of 2013 marked the transition from the visioning work aided by SSM, to the planning production phase marked by the collaboration with another technical assistance resource called the *Urban Sustainability Accelerator (USA),* a new program created to help mid-sized and smaller urban areas implement sustainability projects, to move their proposals from a concept to reality. This program was made possible through support of Portland State University's Toulan School of Urban Studies and Planning, the Institute for Sustainable Solutions, and a grant from the Summit Foundation. The timing of this technical resource coincided with our ongoing efforts to create a plan for India Street. In November, 2013 we established a stakeholder advisory committee, the India Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee (ISNAC) appointed by the City Council, along with other interested citizens to assist the Planning Office to complete the plan. ISNAC established five work groups to flesh out the plan: Housing & Equity; Land Development & Form-Based Code; Economic Development; Historic Preservation; and Infrastructure & Landscape. These Work Groups met continuously from January through July of 2014 to investigate issues and develop policy and implementation recommendations within their assigned areas. The majority of the substance of this plan is credited to the hard work of these citizen teams with their staff support. Each Work Group reported to the ISNAC on a monthly basis on their findings and recommendations.

The technical assistance through the USA program was ongoing during this period and helped inform the Work Groups in their areas of interest. Highlights include the three-day consulting visit from Michele Reeves, of Civilis Consultants, on February 11 – 13, 2014. Ms. Reeves generated a strong recognition of the stage of India Street's development, and the attributes that lend unique value to the economy of the neighborhood as well as its intrinsic character. True to form, on the night of her final presentation we experienced blizzard-like conditions, so many who could not be there in person viewed the video online. Other highlights included a week-long visitation from a University of California, Davis team headed by Professor Stephen Wheeler and three Landscape Architecture graduate students, who studied the neighborhood and issued a report in December, 2013, *Recommendations for a Sustainable Neighborhood Plan* that focused on environmental sustainability measures for India Street. Also during this intensive working period, we had the benefit of our own University of Southern Maine through Professors Yuseung Kim and Richard Barringer, whose Planning Workshop class produced a May, 2014 report, *Portland Starts Here*, which addresses place branding, economic development, and streetscape recommendations.

In summary, this process relied on our own in-house planning expertise, and the hard work of many very dedicated neighborhood stakeholders who volunteered countless hours to the task. We had some outside consulting and technical resources, where available and as needed, to round out and inform the effort. We are very pleased to convey this plan, which is a tangible product with realistic objectives grounded in an engaged community process.

Finally, several concurrent planning efforts will have direct but still undetermined impacts on the India Street neighborhood and this Plan.

Public Planning Processes:

- **The Franklin Street Redesign Phase II** is underway, the objective of which is to narrow the roadway, redesign intersections, and employ Complete Streets policies making the street safe and useable for all modes. The street will ideally take on a more active and urban character but the final results of this process remain to be determined. Considering the feedback received throughout the India Street planning process the neighborhood is most affected by the topics of connectivity and the reposition of the right-of-way. The Transportation Plan of the Comprehensive Plan states, "The City should promote the interconnection of neighborhood streets and pathways, so that there are multiple paths of travel to get to destinations within and between neighborhoods by foot and bicycle, as well as auto." In keeping with the policy for an interconnected street network, the neighborhood would benefit from restoring connections to and in some cases across Franklin Street. At the very least, improved bicycle/pedestrian connections across Franklin Street are necessary and desired; reconnecting vehicular access to Franklin Street from one or both streets (Newbury and Federal) is desired if it can be done safely. If it is determined that no vehicular connection is to be provided at Federal or Newbury streets, remaining public space would be well-suited as a public open space. It is not likely that the neighborhood would be satisfied to have no additional connections to Franklin Street. ISNAC assumes the premise that the neighborhood (and city) would benefit most from increasing the development opportunities within the neighborhood. The neighborhood would also benefit from active, urban uses along Franklin Street. Priority locations for development opportunities include the blocks between Middle and Congress Streets.
- **Lincoln Park** is undergoing a master plan process with future restoration and improvements proposed. The park is a potential open space asset to the India Street neighborhood. Currently, there is a lack of connectivity between the neighborhood and the park and an absence of liveliness and activity. ISNAC supports solutions that balance expansion of Lincoln Park with opportunities for development along the India Street neighborhood edge at Franklin Street. The ISNAC advocates for improved connections between the neighborhood and park, especially pedestrian and bicycle.

Private Development Projects:

- **The Portland Company** complex is undergoing a master plan process with proposed significant redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the historic property. Details about the uses and forms are undetermined at the adoption of this plan. As a large neighboring property, what happens on that site will impact the India Street neighborhood, potentially increasing the resident population, office and amenities, and foot and vehicular traffic past and through India Street.
- **Munjoy South Townhouses** is a low-income housing development adjacent to the India Street neighborhood to the East. Developed post-war as part of a city redevelopment strategy, this complex may be redeveloped in the future. It is not known whether future development on this site will remain affordable housing and what form and density it will take. This development is one of the larger affordable housing developments near the India Street neighborhood; its size, proximity, and affordability impact the development of the neighborhood in terms of growth, services, and transportation needs.

Why a *Sustainable* Neighborhood Plan?

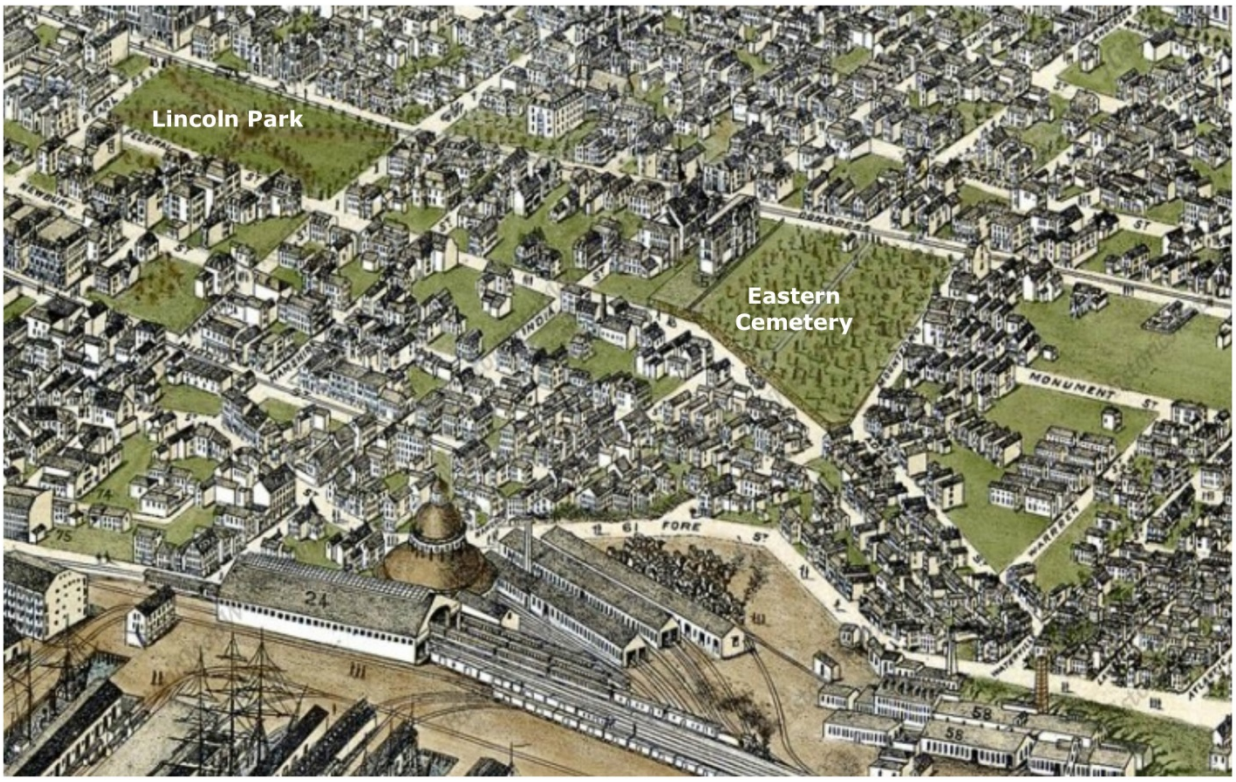
We have proposed this plan as a sustainable neighborhood plan. To understand this approach, it is necessary to review the sustainability principles of Community, Economy, and Environment. Since the City Council adopted the *Sustainable Portland Plan* in 2009, as part of our comprehensive plan, we have endeavored to use the sustainability model in planning and policy making. *Sustainable Portland* offered the final challenge to future policy makers:

> **"To become a sustainable community, the City of Portland must commit to a continuous process of self-assessment and adaptation. When faced with decisions, our City government, residents, institutions, and businesses should ask a series of questions:**
>
> - **Is this decision good for the environment, the economy, and the community?**
> - **Is this good for the long-term?**
>
> **If the answers are "yes," then the decision will move us toward becoming a more sustainable city."**
>
> **Sustainable Portland – Incorporating Sustainability into Everyday Decision Making City of Portland, 2009, Portland Comprehensive Plan**

Sustainability principles are imbedded throughout this planning process and plan. We have incorporated the work by Sustain Southern Maine, which looks to urban neighborhood growth as vital to a sustainable region. We have had the technical assistance from the Urban Sustainability Accelerator, which, as the name suggests, seeks to promote sustainable practices in small cities across America. We have looked deep into the neighborhood itself, to examine what is needed to sustain a vibrant, healthy, prosperous future. We could call this a neighborhood development plan, or a neighborhood master plan, or comprehensive plan. The title could change, but the imperative to plan affirmatively for a healthy community, economy, and environment is paramount as we face the challenges and changes to come. This plan touches upon these three factors and presents a balanced set of recommendations that address each of them appropriately for this stage of development in this India Street neighborhood.

As a City Council-adopted neighborhood plan, the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan becomes an adopted element of the city-wide Comprehensive Plan. A Comprehensive Plan is a long-range plan that provides a policy framework to guide municipal decisions. Portland has conducted numerous long-range planning activities that have produced a variety of components of the Comprehensive Plan, which include functional elements, such as the Transportation Plan, and strategic or geographic area plans, of which this plan is an example.

History – The India Street Neighborhood



India Street Neighborhood in 1871

India Street has the distinction of being the first street in Portland and the center of the city's earliest settlement. Although little remains from this early chapter in the area's history, the story of what followed is compelling and unlike any other neighborhood in the city. The India Street and waterfront area was the main commercial district of Portland prior to the Great Fire of 1866, when the core of the downtown moved to the Old Port. As early as the 1820's, the India Street Neighborhood was home to a large community of African Americans. Later, it became the point of entry and first home to many of the city's newly-arriving immigrant groups, including Irish, Italian, Jewish, and Scandinavian populations. The neighborhood was the hub of intermodal transportation where shipping and ferries, trains, and land transportation converged around the waterfront generating a center of activity. Newcomers found stability working as laborers on the city's waterfront, Grand Trunk Railroad, and nearby Portland Company. As they became established, each group made its mark on the area, building impressive churches and synagogues and launching a wide range of small businesses and institutions. Public health facilities, including a milk dispensary and medical school, were built on India Street to address the needs of the residents. North School, the largest elementary school in the state when it was built, responded to the transitional nature of the

North School (1867)

neighborhood by offering occupational training and other innovative programs designed specifically to help the immigrant and first generation children it served.

The historic buildings that remain today tell the story of who lived here and how this neighborhood evolved and functioned. Landmark structures such as North School, the India Street Firehouse, and numerous churches and synagogues are very important to the story. So, too, are the modest wood frame houses owned by the founders of the Abyssinian Meeting House, the triple-deckers that housed immigrant families, and the small commercial structures that were built to serve the needs of a self-contained neighborhood. Just as the neighborhood's remaining historic structures provide tangible evidence of its history, they also establish the strong and appealing visual character of the area.

Abyssinian Meeting House (1828)

Since the mid-20th century, the neighborhood has lost a number of key landmarks, including the Grand Trunk Station and the house where Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born, at the corner of Fore and Hancock streets. Once-dominant population groups have moved on to other parts of the city, leaving the neighborhood with just a few hundred households. Insensitive alterations to historic structures and the clearing of older buildings for surface parking lots and discordant new construction have diminished the character of the neighborhood. The most dramatic change, of course, was the construction of the Franklin Arterial, which entailed the removal of many homes and commercial structures at the western end of the neighborhood, and severed what had been a seamless transition to the downtown core. The removal of homes and construction of Munjoy South public housing on Mountfort Street created another abrupt boundary to the neighborhood where there previously had been none.

Franklin Arterial (1967) changes the neighborhood, creates disconnected conditions

A mix of different building types on Congress St

Notwithstanding these losses, the neighborhood retains numerous elements of its past that warrant recognition and preservation. This historic building fabric could also inform the scale and character of new development, which would result in a lively mix of new and old within a distinctive, human scale, mixed-use neighborhood.

An older, downtown adjacent neighborhood such as India Street has assets that significantly outweigh its challenges. In addition to the cultural significance of the historic neighborhood, today's market values historic architectural fabric that provides a human-scale foundation for future development. Significant parcels, including those formerly in industrial use, are vacant or underused and inviting for redevelopment. As an existing urban neighborhood, it enjoys a relatively complete infrastructure that is ripe to support revitalization. The historic street grid is walkable and contributes both to quality of life and to market value for the land uses served by it. Multi-modal transportation services, both existing and potential, create choices for those who want to live or work in or to visit the neighborhood. This mixed-use neighborhood with proximity to downtown already has a core mix of residential and commercial uses, including long-standing uses that are well recognized and loved, and may serve as springboards to additional development. The most important characteristic of all, however, is the prevalence and importance of *people*; the neighborhood is the product of the people who have been here, past and present, and this plays a key role in shaping the future of the India Street neighborhood.

India Street Neighborhood Identity Past and Present

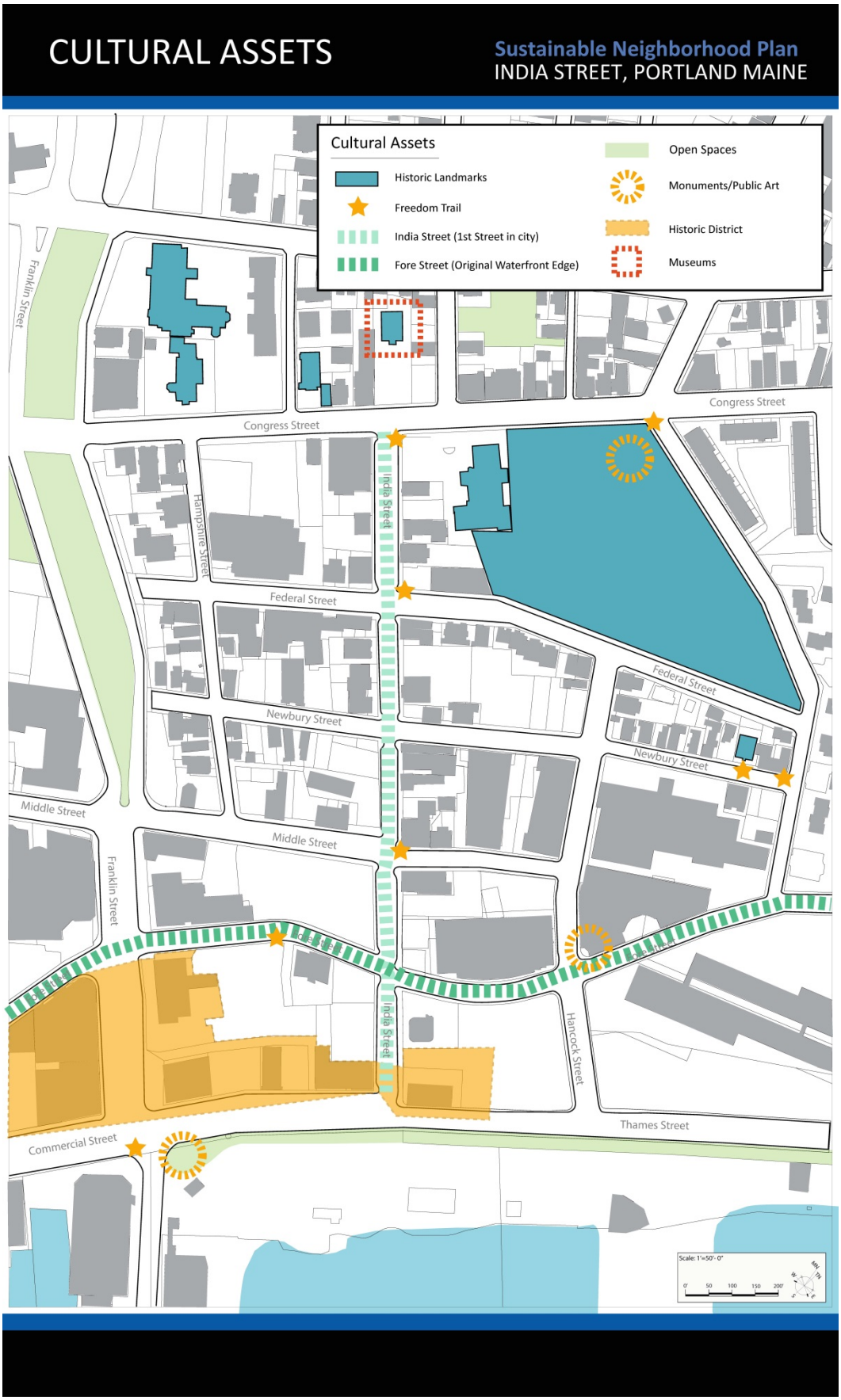
From the results of a Neighborhood Workshop with Michele Reeves, Civilis Consulting, February 2014

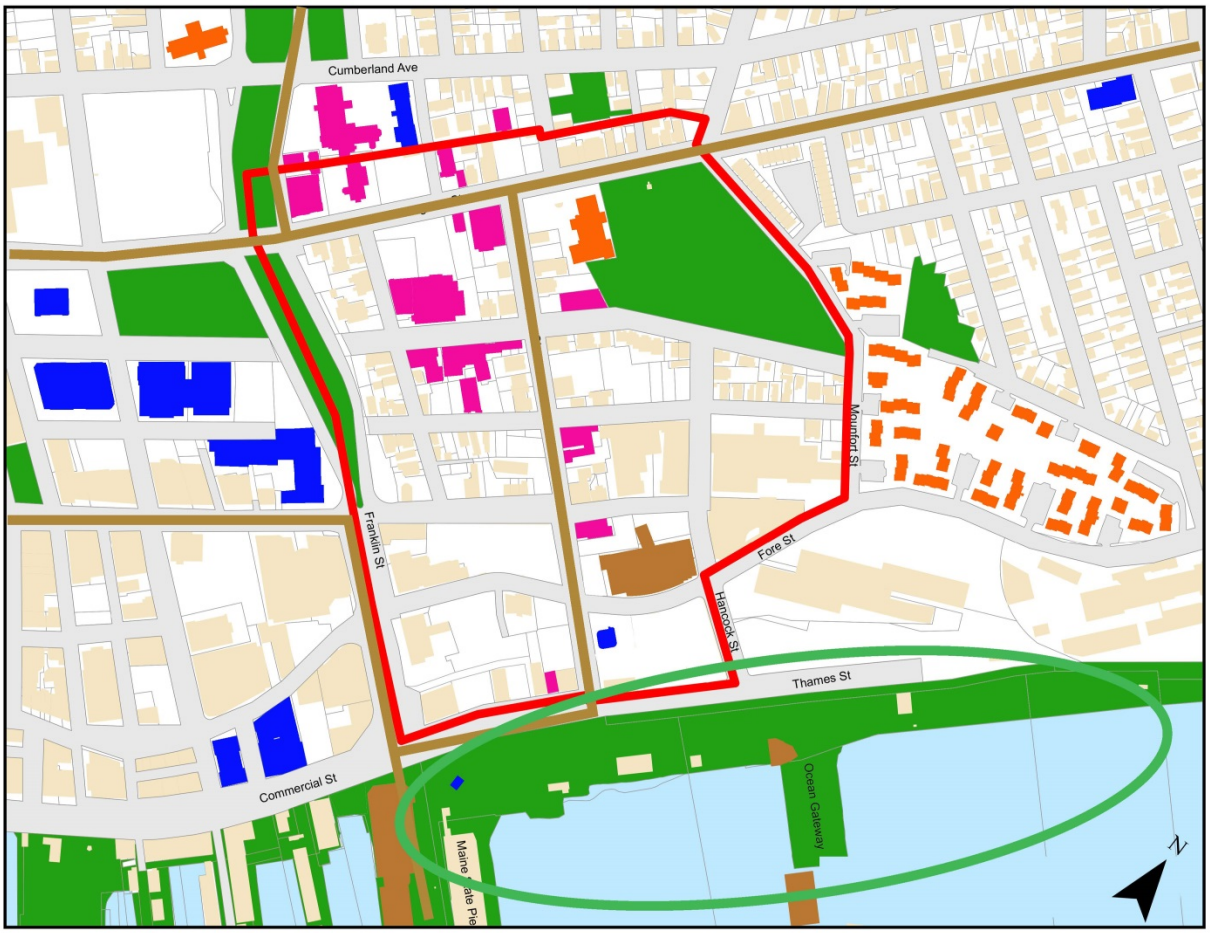
Assets to Build Upon

- **Cultural Heritage –** Portland starts here!
- **Historic –** Landmark buildings and a historic building fabric
- **Adjacent –** Waterfront, Residential neighborhoods, Downtown, Ferry and Cruise terminals
- **Shop Local –** Destination and landmark stores; Small, independent business and entrepreneurial culture; Truly mixed-use
- **Food Destination –** Many restaurants that draw people from all over the city and region
- **Accessible –** Walkable, bus connections, ample parking, good biking streets, ferry terminal
- **Geographic Advantage –** The neighborhood slopes to the waterfront, providing views
- **Development Possibilities –** Many development opportunities of varying scale

Challenges to Face

- **A Lack of Clear Identity –** The neighborhood lacks a clear identity and has never before been the subject of a neighborhood plan
- **The Constraints of Past Land Uses –** Industrial uses, many now defunct, were common in neighborhoods like this, with brownfield and clean-up costs associated with them
- **Scale of Development –** Large development sites have resulted in recent redevelopment that does not comport well with the desires of neighborhood residents and businesses, historic buildings, and neighborhood character in height or scale
- **Disconnected –** The neighborhood edges have been seriously altered and/or sealed off


CULTURAL ASSETS
Sustainable Neighborhood Plan
INDIA STREET, PORTLAND MAINE
Cultural Assets
Historic Landmarks
Freedom Trail
India Street (1st Street in city)
Fore Street (Original Waterfront Edge)
Open Spaces
Monuments/Public Art
Historic District
Museums
Franklin Street
Congress Street
Congress Street
India Street
Hampshire Street
Federal Street
Federal Street
Newbury Street
Newbury Street
Middle Street
Middle Street
Franklin Street
India Street
Hancock Street
Thames Street
Commercial Street



Physical/Land Assets
- Waterfront (views and physical access)
- Parks and open space
  - Playgrounds – Peppermint Park, Adams Street
  - Public open spaces
  - Trails
  - Recreational facilities – Basketball at Adams Street
- Vacant Land – 21 parcels

Transportation & Mobility
- Bus Routes - 4 bus lines (1, 6, 7, and 8)
- Ocean Gateway Terminal
- Casco Bay LInes Terminal
- Parking Garages

Community, Health, and Resources
- Religious Institutions
- Community groups, Neighborhood Associations
- Advocacy groups and centers
- Clinics and counseling centers
- Community Meeting Spaces
- Hospitals, clinics, and health offices
- Grocery Stores

Local Institutions
- Schools, colleges, and universities
- Fire/Police and other emergency services
- Federal Agencies

Affordable Housing

Assets in the India Street neighborhood and surrounds

Goals and Vision Statements

The India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan is framed by five Goals and six Vision Statements . . .

GOALS
for the India Street Neighborhood

Vitality

- The vision for the India Street neighborhood includes vibrant streets. Improvements to the street level environment, public realm, and open spaces will encourage and attract activity.
- Vitality for this neighborhood can be achieved, in part, by encouraging and directing residential growth, especially small infill projects.
- Improving the connectivity (of all modes) to and from the neighborhood will elevate the "adjacent" status of the neighborhood by making it a destination.
- A vital neighborhood also considers its future; the neighborhood seeks to reduce its vulnerability to climate change and embrace strategies that consider future quality of life including transportation, energy, and sea level rise.
- Economic prosperity is a crucial part of neighborhood vitality - strategies around economic development are a high priority.

Good Quality Design

- People are attracted to neighborhoods with good quality design. This includes not only the materials and aesthetics of new development but also the street presence and longevity of a project.
- Compatibility , especially in terms of building scale, is essential in a historic and mixed-used neighborhood such as this one.
- In this neighborhood, good quality design also includes good quality rehabilitation of existing and historic buildings.
- Infrastructure improvements shall be included in this goal - the public realm and streetscape are of equal importance to the quality of life as buildings are. Standards for high quality design shall also be held true for infrastructure changes or improvements.

Strong Neighborhood Identity that Builds on its Heritage

- India Street was the first street in Portland and the neighborhood is rich in cultural history. These qualities are at the heart of the neighborhood identity and should be at the forefront of any strategy that deals with neighborhood character, objectives, relationships, or environment.
- Streetscape and building improvements (both existing and historic) as well as new development should contribute to an identity that promotes the neighborhood to prospective residents, tourists, and adjacent neighborhoods as a destination.
- The historic fabric and landmarks tell a story about this neighborhood and are critically important to its identity.

Diversity

- The India Street neighborhood has always hosted a diverse resident population. The neighborhood plan should encourage and maintain that diversity of residents (age, race, ethnicity, gender, family size, income, etc.)
- Quality of life for a diverse population will include considerations such as food access, transportation choices, access to open space, and diversity of residential unit types and ownership models.
- The built environment of the neighborhood is diverse; a dynamic urban neighborhood keeps a diverse mix of building types by including contemporary and historic buildings, and varying building scales.

Enhance Mixed-use Nature of Neighborhood

- The India Street Neighborhood is truly a mixed-use neighborhood with residences, business, offices, hotels, retail, and restaurants. The neighborhood plan should allow this mixed-use nature of the neighborhood to continue and to expand.
- New development and the built environment should continue to support and enhance mixed uses.
- The neighborhood plan should especially support existing businesses and attract new businesses to the neighborhood, but especially those that provide services and amenities to neighborhood residents and workers.

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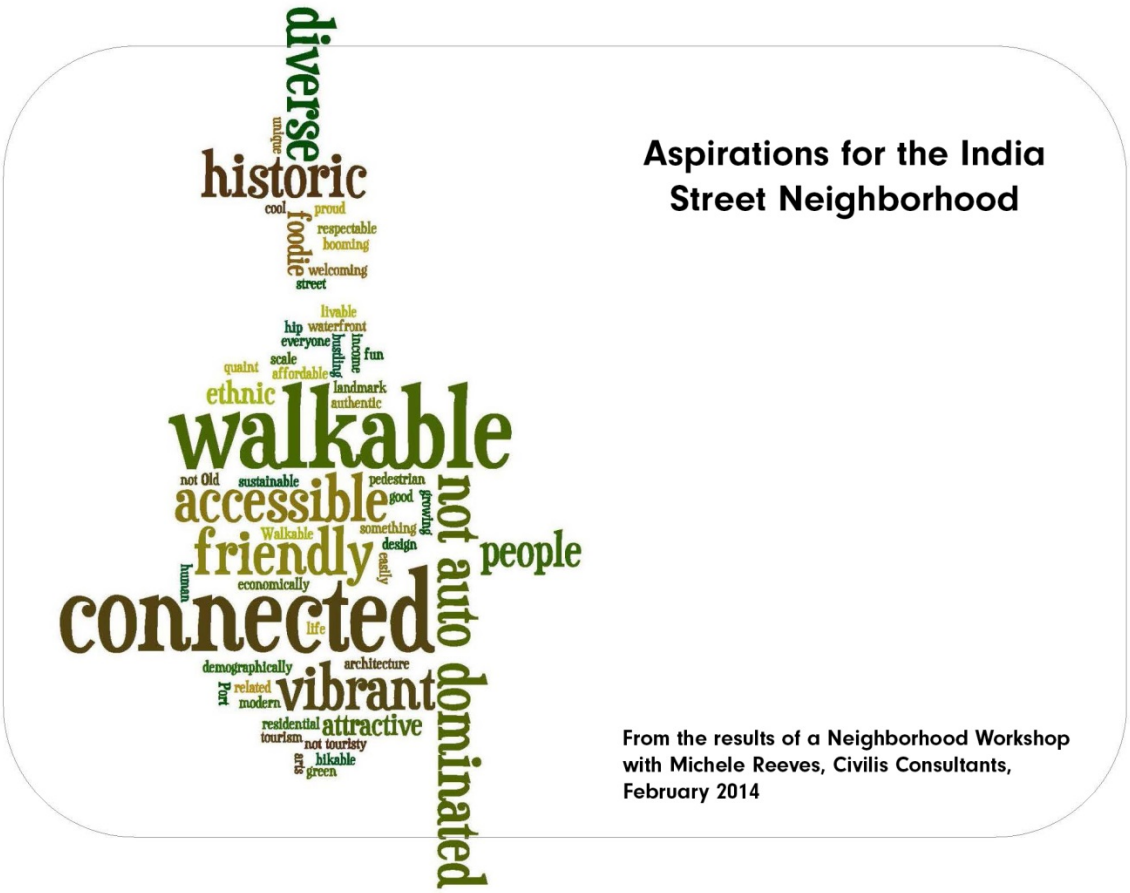


Vision: Cultivating the Future of the India Street Neighborhood

Vision Statement 1: Sustainable Growth and Development - The India Street neighborhood is on the cusp of substantial growth and development that will firmly establish its place in the city and region for decades to come. It is poised for growth, and has chosen to shape that growth to its singular character and heritage. It is fitting that this neighborhood welcomes a share of the growth that is happening in greater Portland, given its adjacency to downtown and the waterfront, its walkability, its access to transit, its in-place infrastructure, and its strong mix of and immediate proximity to housing, jobs, commerce, and services. Over the course of more than two years, this neighborhood has pulled together property owners, residents, and associated stakeholders and community members who care deeply about *how* this neighborhood will evolve and develop. This plan is the result of their efforts and hard work. It presents the vision, principles, and strategies to welcome the right form and shape of growth and development that will bring this transitioning neighborhood to maturity.

Vision Statement 2: A Neighborhood of Diverse Peoples – India Street is and always has been diverse, and we wish it to remain so. Histories of immigrant communities – landing here and gaining a foothold, and making their way in America – have left a durable imprint that we celebrate. Maintaining diversity means conscious efforts to welcome all kinds of new arrivals: whether they be move-up urbanists who can live anywhere and choose India Street for its location; or new arrivals continuing the traditional role of this neighborhood, welcoming new immigrants who above all need affordable housing and convenient access to jobs and services; young singles and small households who are embarking on adult life and value the social landscape and access to all that Portland has to offer; working families striving to live responsibly by choosing a compact urban neighborhood where one can afford to live and maintain a low carbon footprint; or an aging population wishing for an active life and access to Portland's amenities, activities, restaurants, and services. Any and all of these are welcome to make India Street home, and become part of our community.

Vision Statement 3: An Authentic Neighborhood True to its Heritage – Portland's *first street* was India Street, and it is a point of pride and identity that this neighborhood set the stage for Portland's growth and development. Vestiges of this history abound, from the religious institutions to the civic and industrial buildings, to the vernacular working class houses on Federal and Newbury and Hampshire streets. These features distinguish the neighborhood from others, adding to the mix of peninsula neighborhoods with a unique community fabric. This heritage creates a sense of responsibility to protect the traces of the past as well as positing a form and pattern for future growth that is recognizable as India Street. We invite development into our neighborhood, as it is essential to its vitality and to fill its voids, particularly in the southern section below Middle Street where there is much vacant land and surface parking. And we will insist that new development add to the indigenous structure of this neighborhood by demonstrating an incremental and varied street, lot, and block pattern. The scale of development may grow but the form must reflect the attributes that typify and reinforce the fabric of this neighborhood.

Vision Statement 4: A Fun, Industrious, Creative, Artisanal, and Prosperous Neighborhood – The sidewalks are full of life and commerce. Within a five minute walk multiple food products are prepared, sold, consumed, and savored. Local businesses are mostly home grown and provide authenticity to the neighborhood - the regional brew house, the bakers, the textile and furniture designers, the grocers, the coffee houses, and restaurants. Amato's, one of Maine's few chain establishments, was founded here on India Street around 1902. We will build on this cluster of commercial activity on the core retail streets and create a continuous "trail of crumbs" for visitors and residents to follow from the Old Port and the waterfront, from Commercial Street to Congress Street. We expect that in this area all of the buildings and businesses will engage with the community both visually and functionally, that there will be a "conversation with the street," and people will enjoy being here and engaging in this dialogue.

Vision Statement 5: A Healthy, Connected, and Active Neighborhood – The India Street Neighborhood provides opportunities for health and well-being ranging from health-related services to recreation amenities. Within a short walk are many recreation and open space assets: historic Lincoln Park; the Eastern Promenade Trail that caters to children, runners, bikers, strollers, bladers, boarders, and those just out for a scenic stroll; and a playground tucked into edge of Munjoy Hill off Mountfort Street. These gems are now somewhat hidden from view and access; but with some thoughtful interventions – including generous and well-designed sidewalks and passageways, good lighting and streetscape furnishings, public art, and intuitive wayfinding strategies – we will embrace these assets and enlist them more fully into the life of the neighborhood. Street connectivity remains a fundamental challenge especially in connecting to and across Franklin Street for all modes, with a pedestrian and bicycle priority. Pedestrian connections throughout the neighborhood need improvements that will enable visitors and residents alike to feel comfortable navigating the area and accessing surrounding amenities.

Vision Statement 6: A Neighborhood of Strong Identity – We have learned a lot about ourselves and our place within the larger community during this planning exploration of the India Street Neighborhood. Our heritage, our diversity, our industriousness, our unique physical character, and our location on Portland's marvelous peninsula all constitute the unique and authentic identity, charm, and spirit of this community. These qualities and characteristics contribute to our pride of place, sense of belonging, and conception of an exceptional community. *Portland Starts Here.* We celebrate this and all it implies. We will share this heritage and identity with the larger community, for us to enjoy, and for others to appreciate.

Thirteen Development Principles

1. Strong Neighborhood Identity

Portland starts here in the India Street neighborhood; the spirit of this place will be reflected in its identity and character, distinct from Old Port and the Downtown. The story of India Street is long and compelling; now is the time to tell and celebrate it.

The India Street Neighborhood presents a human-scale, downtown-adjacent neighborhood with commerce, light industry, authenticity, and community. What visitors and others are less aware of is its distinctive history – Portland's first street and first neighborhood, early maritime connections, later industrial development, period architecture, religious and cultural diversity. The key principle here is to bring these unique characteristics and assets into closer connection and a cohesive neighborhood identity that will permeate the built environment as well as associated housing and business – all serving to strengthen and enhance the community.

2. Diversity of Residents

People are at the very heart of all that India Street Neighborhood is about. It is characterized by diversity, past and present, in all meanings of the word – race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability, household size, and socio/economic status. For the future, the India Street neighborhood will continue to be a place known for its authentic diversity; and diversity of residents and activities will be encouraged and maintained.

Two major factors contribute to neighborhood diversity: housing choice and affordability. The recent housing development trend in the neighborhood has been toward large condominium units, often catering to empty-nester couples and part-year residents. Left to themselves, market forces

alone will provide more of this housing type, while a balance of housing types is desired. The City is especially interested in development that will provide homes for families with children, and young, single workforce households. This should include rental units and a mix of efficiencies, one, two, and three-bedroom units. As the neighborhood residential base grows, so too will the *type* of housing remain varied. Affordability will likewise be considered in development and policy decisions.

3. Neighborhood Heritage and Historic Preservation

Unlike many other neighborhoods on the peninsula, the India Street neighborhood grew to become a strikingly diverse and self-contained neighborhood, with its own "main street," houses of worship, institutional buildings, and workshop industries that provided employment for minority groups that populated the area. While the neighborhood has lost significant elements of its past, much remains to tell its compelling story. The historic buildings that remain not only tell the story about how this neighborhood has evolved and functioned, but also contribute significantly to its unique character, scale, and patterns.

Protecting and enhancing India Street's historic building stock is essential if the area is to retain its authenticity and build a strong sense of place. Alterations to existing buildings, both historic and non-historic, will be carefully considered so the neighborhood's character will not diminish over time. Infill construction will be a clear product of its own time, and respect established development patterns that characterize the neighborhood.

Opportunities to tell the neighborhood's story, through interpretive signage or other means, will be fully explored and implemented. Understanding the history of the neighborhood will foster pride among local residents and businesses, and will enhance the visitor's experience.

4. Mixed-Use Neighborhood

The India Street neighborhood is today truly a mixed-use neighborhood with residences, businesses, offices, hotels, retail, and restaurants. The neighborhood plan should allow the mixed-use nature of this neighborhood to continue and expand, with the goal of providing a fair and high quality of life for all manner of people.

Fostering a desirable and diverse neighborhood requires a certain level of services and neighborhood amenities. Important and interesting destinations, from places that supply necessities to those that supply entertainment, are within walking and bicycling distances. Real estate developments, policies, and economic development plans that maintain or grow the level of service and amenities for the neighborhood will be encouraged.

5. Vibrant Local Economy

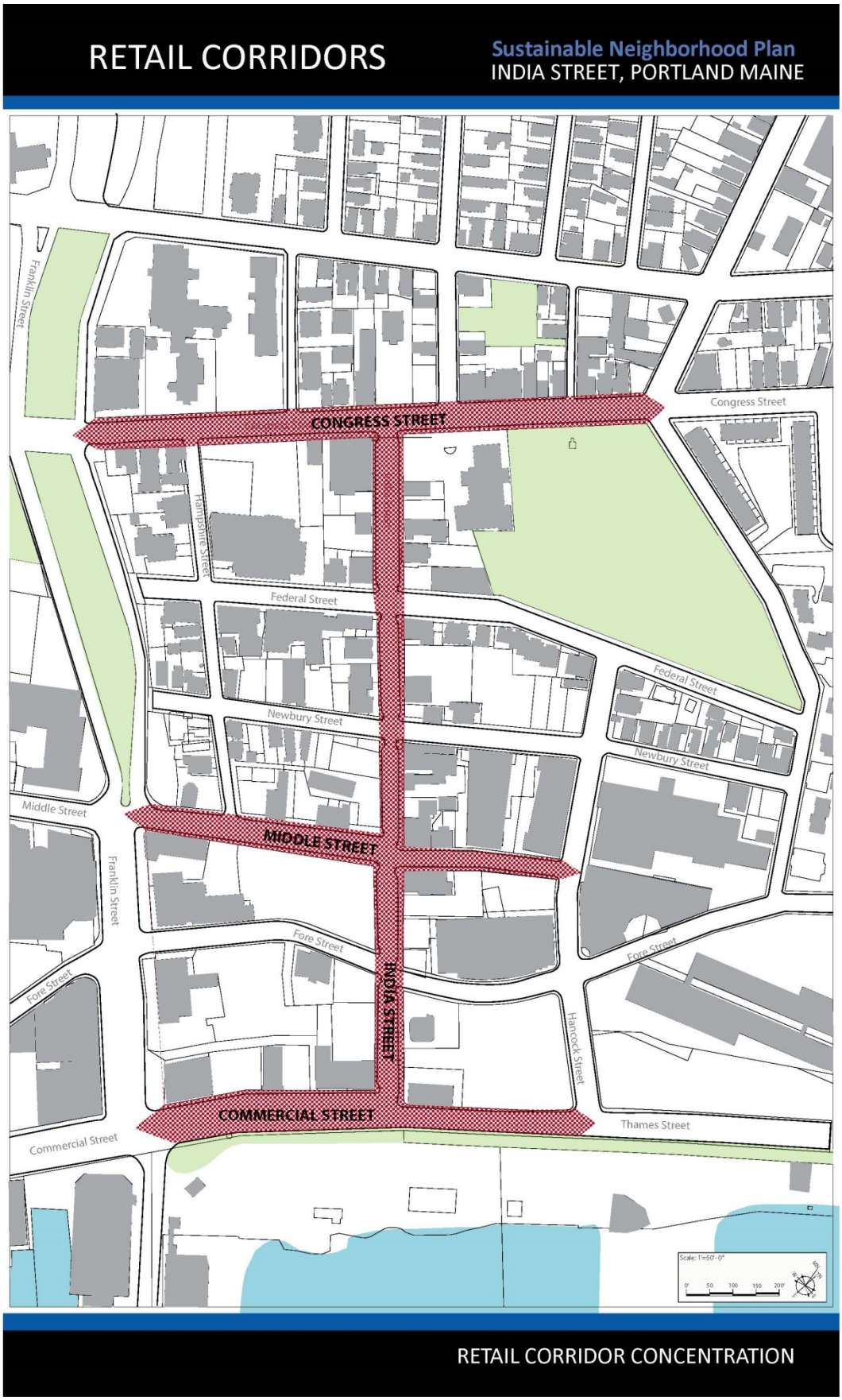
Businesses are important to the success of a mixed-use neighborhood, and the vitality of the India Street Neighborhood economy impacts the city as a whole. The economic goals for the neighborhood are to grow employment opportunities and enhance economic vitality and sustainability.

The India Street neighborhood draws people who recognize and enjoy its unique character and heritage. Those who visit or live in the neighborhood appreciate its authenticity, local artisan retail and eating establishments, and diverse cultural history. Building on these strengths through communication of identity, concentration of commercial uses, protection of the historic and human-scaled built fabric, and stronger relationships within the neighborhood will attract greater numbers of visitors, residents, and businesses to the area and move the neighborhood towards its economic goals.

6. Retail Corridors

The India Street Neighborhood is home to destination food and retail businesses, among Portland's most popular. The beginnings of a retail corridor exist on India Street, the neighborhood's main street, as well as on Congress and Commercial streets, and commercial uses are dispersed across the neighborhood. The neighborhood's vitality will be heightened with more concentrated commercial activity – particularly restaurants and retail – along India and on Congress, Commercial, and Middle streets.

Commercial Street is a popular pedestrian route and entry into Portland for cruise ship and ferry passengers. Enticing people to the India Street Neighborhood will depend, in part, on creating a continuous "chain of crumbs" leading from Commercial up India Street. This will require a phased approach, focusing first on recruiting to India Street new retail shops and restaurants, from Commercial up to Middle streets; and then continuing this effort along India all the way to Congress Street. People attract more people; by concentrating retail to strategic corridors the streets become more active and boost economic vitality. This strategy for the neighborhood retail environment will strengthen existing businesses and attract more visitors, residents, and businesses.


RETAIL CORRIDORS
Sustainable Neighborhood Plan
INDIA STREET, PORTLAND MAINE
Franklin Street
CONGRESS STREET
Congress Street
Hampshire Street
Federal Street
Federal Street
Newbury Street
Newbury Street
Middle Street
MIDDLE STREET
Franklin Street
Fore Street
Fore Street
Fore Street
INDIA STREET
Hancock Street
COMMERCIAL STREET
Thames Street
Commercial Street
RETAIL CORRIDOR CONCENTRATION

7. Guided Growth

The India Street neighborhood is an ideal place to target sustainable growth due to the availability of development sites and existing urban infrastructure. Sustainable growth is growth that occurs in an already-established urban neighborhood, taking advantage of existing infrastructure and services. In the case of India Street, the vision is also for residential growth that supports the neighborhood. The district will accommodate a reasonable share of regional growth over the next 25 years, based on its size and proximity to downtown; and gain critical mass that will support a diverse, vibrant, and mixed-use urban neighborhood. The neighborhood desires a healthy mix of uses. The type of growth will be primarily residential with a substantial increase in housing units; there is already an ample supply of hotels developed. Growth will also come from increased density of smaller units of development rather than increased height. All of this growth will only add to its activity and vitality, promoting it as a vibrant neighborhood center within Portland.

There are several areas in which this growth will be located. Due to availability and size of land, significant growth will occur on large redevelopment sites toward the waterfront. As an urban avenue, Franklin Street has valuable frontage along which new development will redefine the neighborhood's edge and contribute to its identity as a desirable residential/mixed-use district. Smaller infill developments will be strongly encouraged as a way to expand the capacity for neighborhood growth and test prospective housing unit types.

8. Form of Development

Neighborhood growth will carefully consider of form and scale, with an emphasis on "human scale" development and good quality design. Graduation of form will vary by location so that future new development is appropriate to its surrounding context. Within intact historic streets, form is modulated to approximate surrounding building forms. In larger blocks presently dominated by surface parking, new buildings will be scaled proportionately to allow larger buildings with mass and scale designed to achieve a human scale street presence, protection of street view corridors, and varied and permeable block faces. The intended outcome will be a harmonious composition of new and old buildings that fit well together to create a lively fabric of modern and traditional building forms.

The Importance of Form – The identity of a downtown adjacent neighborhood is dictated in large part by its scale and pedestrian-friendly design. Critical elements include[1]:

- Relatively high residential density within a relatively small district, putting many people within walking distance of many activities and, for trips outside of the district, regular and reliable bus service with bus stops;

[1] These are drawn from the India Street Neighborhood workshop discussion, the City's design manual, and reference materials such as Ewing and Bartholomew, *Pedestrian- and Transit-Oriented Design* (2013).

- A fine-grained mix of uses – both horizontal and vertical – that invite a flow of people at different times of the day, seven days a week;
- A street pattern with pedestrian-scaled blocks. Longer blocks and larger buildings will be interrupted and made permeable by mid-block pedestrian ways, alleys, or streets;
- Continuous sidewalks designed with universal access and widths scaled to the pedestrian activity of the street, to allow two couples walking in opposite directions to comfortably pass each other;
- Strong street walls with development placed close to the property line at street frontage
- Street-oriented buildings, with commercial and mixed use buildings with "permeable" facades – front entrances and fenestration that relate to the street;
- Human-scale buildings – neither so tall as to block a pedestrian's cone of vision at four stories, nor so horizontally large or dominated by a single use as to discourage the casual interaction between pedestrians and a mix of uses along the street.

9. Compassionate and Supportive Community

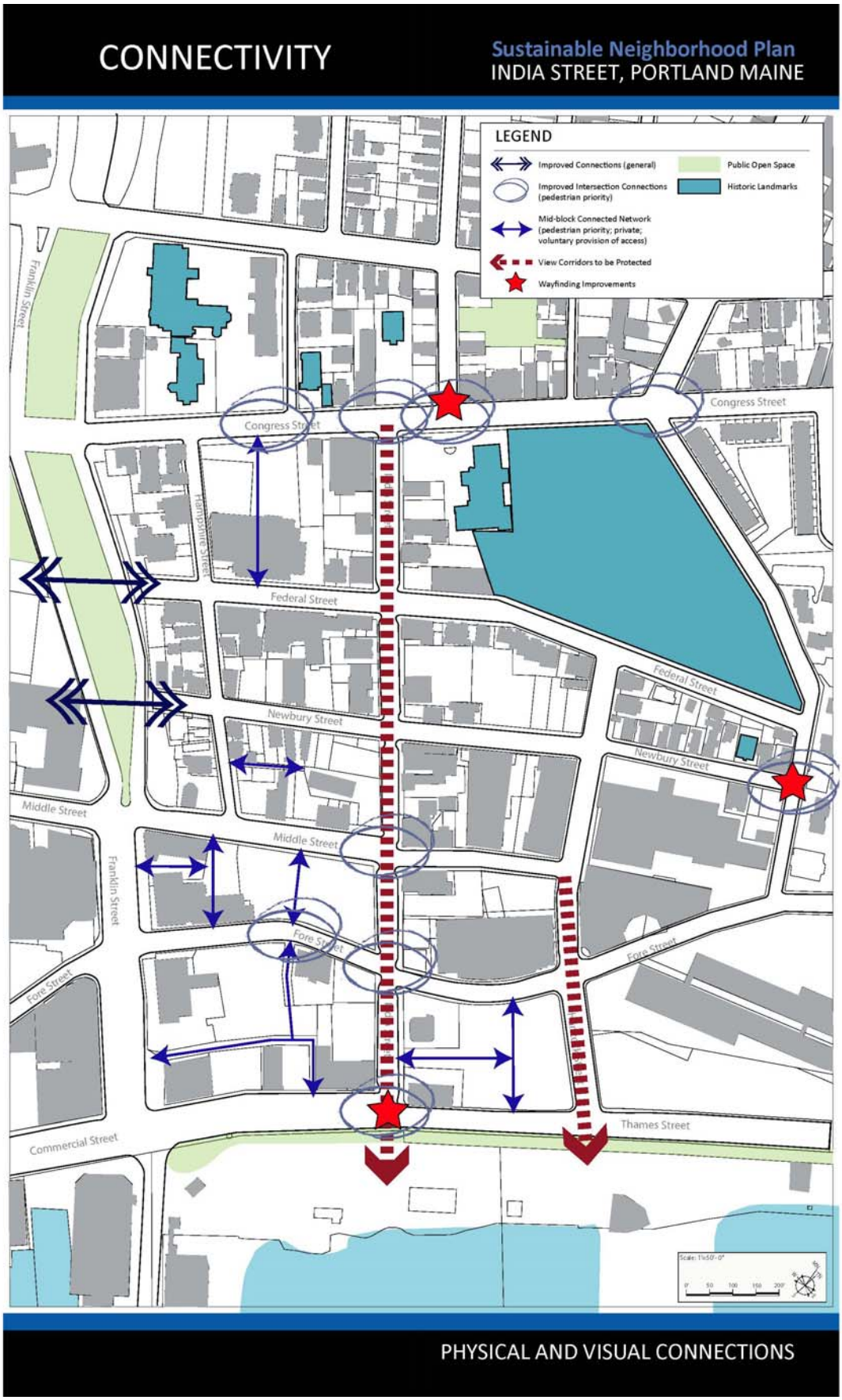
The India Street neighborhood continues a history of welcoming. A walk around the neighborhood reveals a plethora of services and resources ranging from immigrant and elderly services at Catholic Charities, resources for the homeless population at the Cathedral complex and Milestone, low-income housing for the elderly at North School, education opportunities at the Portland Adult Education building, and abundant medical and mental health practices. The compassionate and supportive nature of this neighborhood will be encouraged to prosper; it will continue to be a hospitable landing place for those seeking opportunity in Portland whether it be a new immigrant resident or a fledgling economic enterprise. Efforts to make it accessible with connectivity, transit, and streetscape improvements will go a long way to foster this kind of community.

10. Connected Neighborhood

A downtown-adjacent neighborhood that is disconnected from its downtown is an undervalued and underutilized asset. The *adjacent* nature of this neighborhood is both unique and full of potential. India Street abuts many wondrous assets and resources – residential neighborhoods, the downtown district, and the waterfront. *Connections* to these nearby assets and amenities are fundamental to its economic vitality and greater quality of life. Services and opportunities – from jobs to entertainment to governmental services – will be improved by strengthening the connectedness of the neighborhood. From the point of view of the India Street neighborhood, the redesign of Franklin Street is driven in large part by the desire to re-connect this neighborhood and the Downtown. The Transportation Plan of the Comprehensive Plan states, "The City should promote the interconnection of neighborhood streets and pathways, so that there are multiple paths of travel to get to destinations within and between neighborhoods by foot and bicycle, as well as auto." Reconnecting dead-end streets and formalizing well-loved but informal connection points will help to knit the India Street neighborhood into the city.

The India Street neighborhood already has the fundamental characteristics of a walkable, bikeable neighborhood and the additional advantage of being a transportation hub. The combination of neighborhood adjacency and increased density reinforce the use of alternative transportation modes, reducing dependency on automobiles and allows for the relaxing of parking requirements. Improvements to the local street system, trail system, and transportation system will give priority to connectivity on multiple scales - connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, connectivity to neighboring assets such as Lincoln Park and the waterfront, and connectivity within the neighborhood, itself. Emphasis will be on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes. The walkability of the neighborhood, proximity to jobs on the Portland peninsula, and the availability of bus service will reduce auto dependency. Increased density will support public transportation with shorter time intervals, which, in turn encourages use and viability of the transit system.

Visual connections, especially to the waterfront, are another important type of connection. Wherever possible, access to the waterfront – visual and physical – will be provided as a public amenity. New development will be conscientious of its relationship to the water; view corridors through public rights of way to the water will not be obstructed. Visibility to and from the neighborhood, across Franklin Street and from the water and Commercial Street, will contribute to the identity and presence of the neighborhood, serving to attract visitors as well as elevate the relationship of the neighborhood with the rest of the city.


CONNECTIVITY
Sustainable Neighborhood Plan
INDIA STREET, PORTLAND MAINE
LEGEND
Improved Connections (general)
Improved Intersection Connections (pedestrian priority)
Mid-block Connected Network (pedestrian priority; private; voluntary provision of access)
View Corridors to be Protected
Wayfinding Improvements
Public Open Space
Historic Landmarks
Franklin Street
Congress Street
Hampshire Street
Federal Street
Newbury Street
Middle Street
Fore Street
Commercial Street
Thames Street
PHYSICAL AND VISUAL CONNECTIONS

11. Quality Infrastructure

The streetscape and landscape play an important role in supporting the neighborhood identity and affording a comfortable, inviting, and human-scaled environment. For infrastructure, emphasis will be placed on the experience one has travelling to and throughout the neighborhood, with Complete Streets as the adopted City strategy. The street grid and transportation infrastructure will be improved with priority given to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes. Strategies to improve the streetscape will include increased street trees and plantings, lighting, public restrooms, green infrastructure implementation, wider sidewalks and improved universal access in public right of ways, street furniture deployment, and a neighborhood-wide analysis to evaluate the potential to underground utilities. Neighborhood identity will be reinforced through streetscape design elements with particular priority on India Street which will include street trees, public art, unique and cohesive street furniture, pavement options that have a storytelling or identity component, and gateway elements signaling entrances to the neighborhood.

Vehicle parking, especially surface parking lots, will be de-emphasized. On-street parking, reduced off-street parking requirements, modest off-street lots, structured parking, and car-sharing services will all be needed to satisfy demand. In the India Street neighborhood, the recent structured parking with excess space (as of 2013) was created to relieve some of the constraint that might otherwise exist and to facilitate development of surrounding parcels. Use of shared parking and utility infrastructure strategies will be encouraged.

Finally, improvements to telecommunication infrastructure is crucial to making the India Street neighborhood and the city an attractive place to locate for residents and businesses who increasingly rely on internet access for quality of life and work.

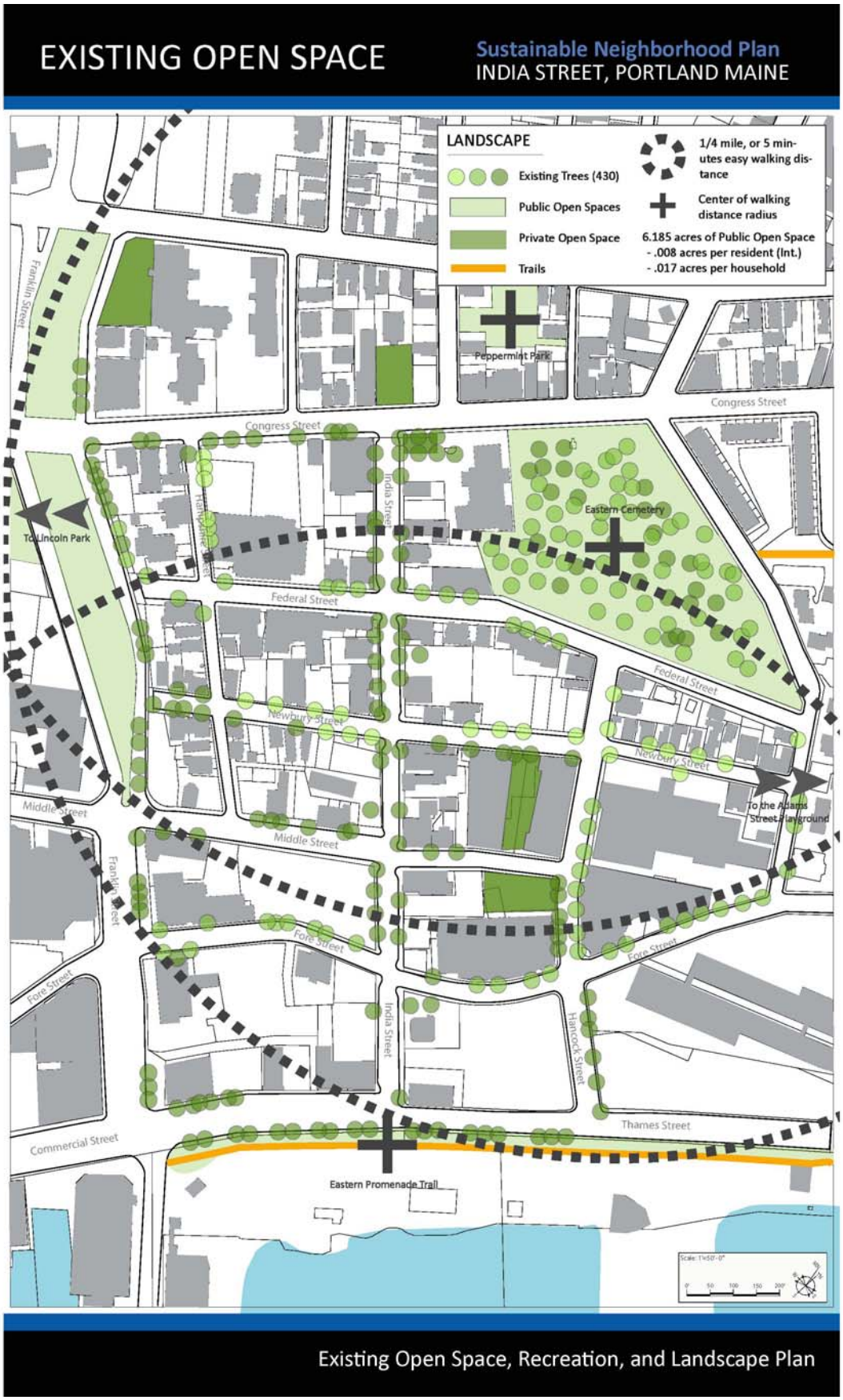
12. Ample Recreation and Open Space

Open space is a most precious commodity in the small, urban India Street neighborhood. Open space amenities greatly enhance quality of life for residents and workers, make for a more attractive built environment, and create opportunities for community gathering and interaction. Every opportunity to improve or enhance public open spaces will be pursued. This principle addresses a guiding principle of the existing open space and recreation plan for the City of Portland, *Green Spaces, Blue Edges:*

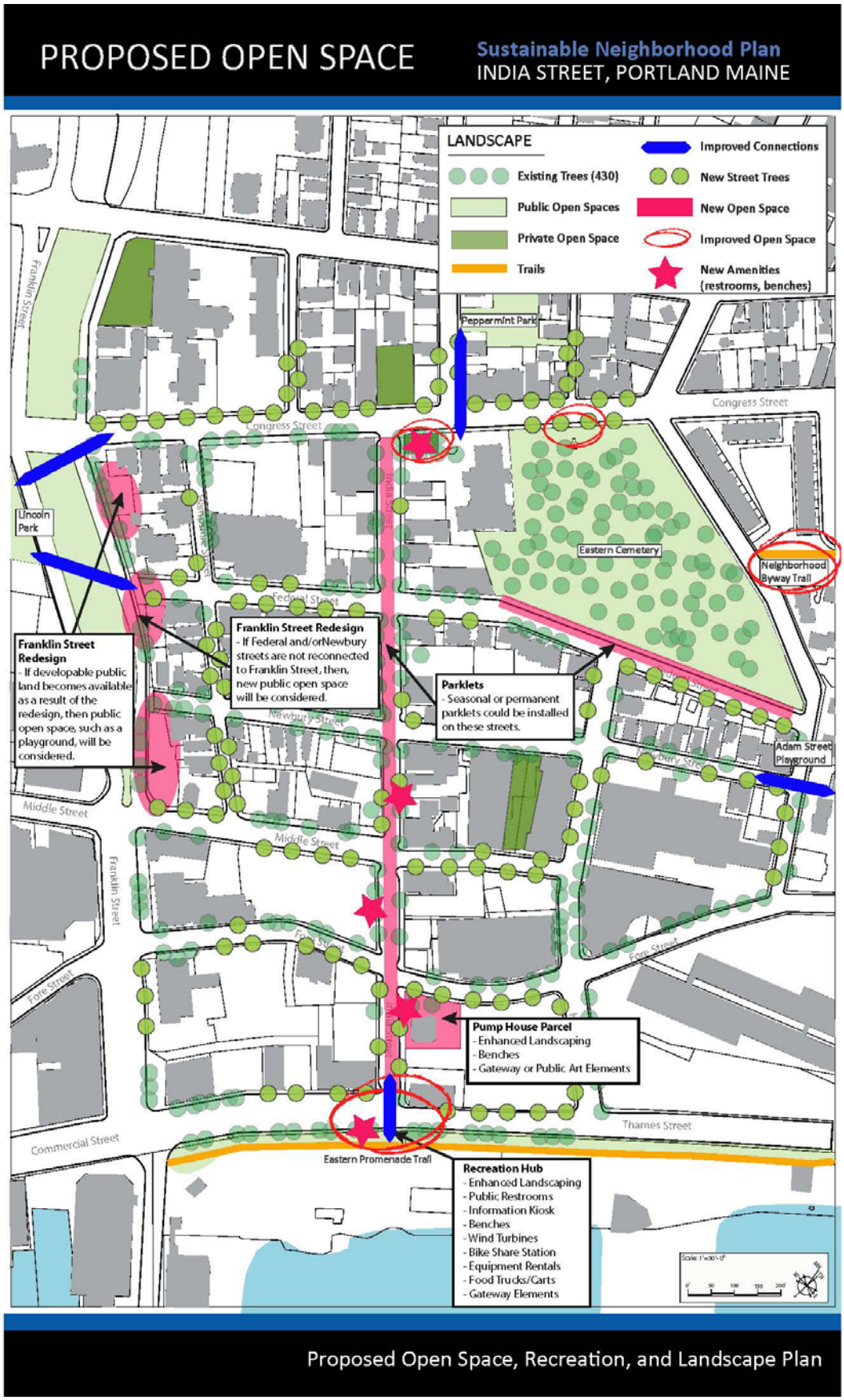
Neighborhoods form the foundation of *Green Spaces, Blue Edges*. The plan exists to serve the health and enjoyment of the neighborhood residents.

- Neighborhoods should have open space focal points
- Recreational opportunities should be available for all ages and genders
- Neighborhood open space should be within walking distance
- Portland residents appreciate their park system

The neighborhood has three avenues to maximize the potential for open spaces of different types and uses: 1) Create new open spaces at the pumping station property, along Franklin Street, and at the foot of India Street, 2) Improve and maintain existing spaces (including private green spaces) within the neighborhood by implementing the Eastern Cemetery Master Plan, for example, and 3) Connect to surrounding open space amenities such as Lincoln Park, playgrounds in Peppermint Park and Adams Street, and the Eastern Promenade Trail.



Existing Open Space, Recreation, and Landscape Plan



Proposed Open Space, Recreation, and Landscape Plan

13. Responsive to Climate Change

As a waterfront-adjacent district, climate change is especially compelling to the India Street neighborhood. Adapting to sea-level rise, reducing stormwater runoff, and mitigating heat island effect are especially important to address, as the neighborhood continues to develop and improve. Future plans for this district will consider such features as low-impact design in public and private development, reduction in impervious surfaces and subsequent opportunity to increase greenery and street trees, flexible ground floor designs, and treatment of roof surfaces to reduce heat island effect and solar reflectance. Incremental changes, including modifying structures and facilities on the water's edge to be more resilient to sea-level rise, will be pursued by both public and private interests. The future India Street neighborhood will be a model to demonstrate that planning for climate change is a benefit to residents', visitors', and workers' quality of life and the quality of the built environment.

Implementation Plan

In order to implement the policies laid out in the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan, twelve **Critical Actions** have been drafted to form an Implementation Plan. Critical Actions are inter-related and high priority initiatives, representing the top one or two strategies from each India Street Neighborhood Advisory Committee Working Group. These twelve Critical Actions are intended to guide the City in measures that can be taken to fulfill the Plan principles and meet the "SMART" test articulated by the City Council as part of its 2014 goal-setting process:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Tangible

It is important to note that the Implementation Plan is meant to guide the City but will not be included in the Comprehensive Plan as policy. These initiatives, taken individually and collectively, will help the City to achieve the policies and objectives of this Plan, but each action will require individual review, consideration, and decision-making in light of the resources available and competing objectives of the City at the time. It is not expected that each item will proceed exactly as prescribed, but that these programs and initiatives, among others that might arise, will be considered in the implementation of this Plan. The creation of these Critical Actions ensures the policy document – the India Street Sustainable Neighborhood Plan – is translated into clear action and will have a beneficial, tangible impact.