

# Newport Tree, Park, and Open Space Master Plan

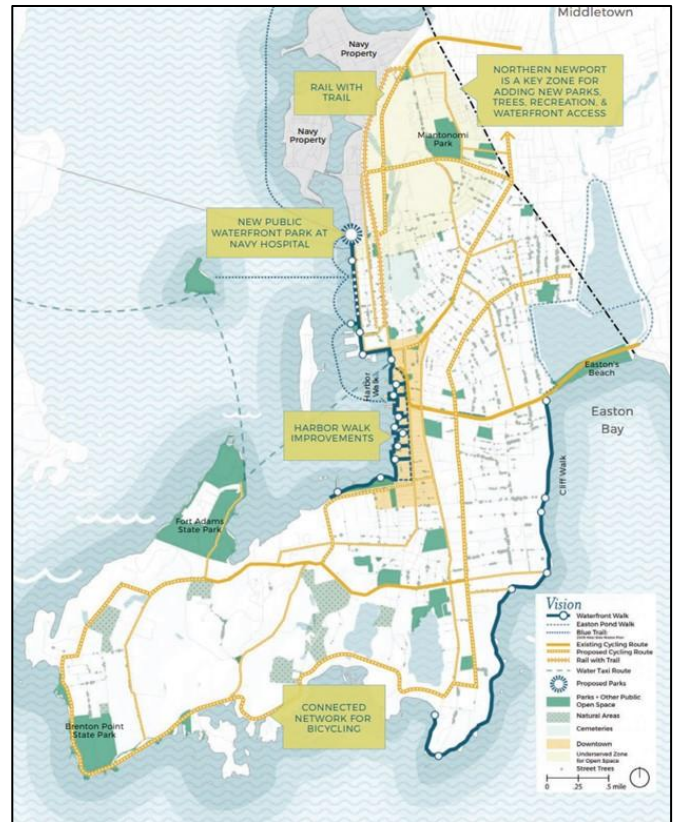
## Background Information:

The Newport Tree, Park and Open Space Master Plan contains the implementation of a forward-looking vision for Newport, RI. The plan incorporates long-term sustainability strategies that includes a balance of open space, recreational opportunities, protected natural habitats and healthy citywide tree canopy. The plan will help create and ensure a well-connected Newport with safe cycling and walking access. Many historic areas such as Harbor Walk, and Ocean Drive require better accessibility and repairs. This plan seeks to reinvest in these historical open spaces and increase connectivity with the greater Newport area, increasing accessibility to amenities across the city.

## Highlights:

### Equitable Access

- Despite having 44% of the city's population, Northern Newport contains only 7.5% of the city's park spaces and 18% of the city's playgrounds. As such, this plan recommends new, and improvements to existing, open space and recreational areas in Northern Newport. The plan also identifies opportunities for improved connectivity from underserved neighborhoods to existing parks, by the installation of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the city. For example, the plan recommends upgrading amenities and basic infrastructure to Miantonomi Park by improving east-west connectivity (ex. Path from Festival Fields Housing to Pell School).



### Climate Change and Resiliency

- Several open spaces in Newport have already experienced the effects of climate change, including sea level rise and increased storm surges. This plan examines areas with high levels of projected sea level rise and flooding. Since floods pose an immediate and significant threat to Newport's parks, trees and open spaces, the plan recommends increasing nature-based solutions to absorb storm water and help clean water. The plan incorporates bioswales, permeable pavement and bio-retention basins as measures to help manage water flow from storms and floods.

### Network and Multimodal Connectivity

- Narrow streets and vehicular congestion limit existing bicycle access in Newport. This plan integrates traffic calming and complete streets features to allow for bike lanes. The plan proposes a Rail-with-Trail shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists that will connect Northern Newport to the rest of Newport. Additional signage will be posted to assert bicyclists and pedestrians' right of way. The Rails-with-Trail will connect downtown Newport to Northern Newport where there are noticeable gaps in connectivity. In addition to Rail-with-Trail, this plan also includes harbor walk improvements, a connected network for bicycling that spans the whole area of Newport.

### Water Access

- There is an existing harbor walk but the access points to the waterfront are inconsistently spaced out. This plan focuses on creating greater waterfront connectivity with the rest of Newport by implementing more uniform access points, helping to create more continuous public access along the downtown waterfront. The plan details a phased approach that introduces a new layout that is a part of the final vision, allowing the city to test new ideas while working towards the vision.

**Conclusion:** The Newport Trees, Parks and Open Space Master Plan realizes that access to these basic amenities should not depend on where someone lives in Newport, and as a result the plan identifies the inequities affecting various demographics and populations within Newport. Importantly, the Master Plan addresses these inequities with a proposed integrated Open Space Management Strategy that implements a public outreach decision-making framework for assuring public input and implementing initiatives to ensure an equitable future of open spaces and parks within Newport.