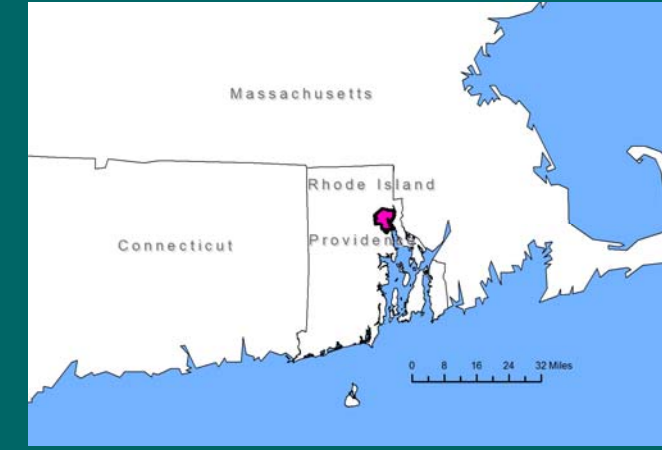
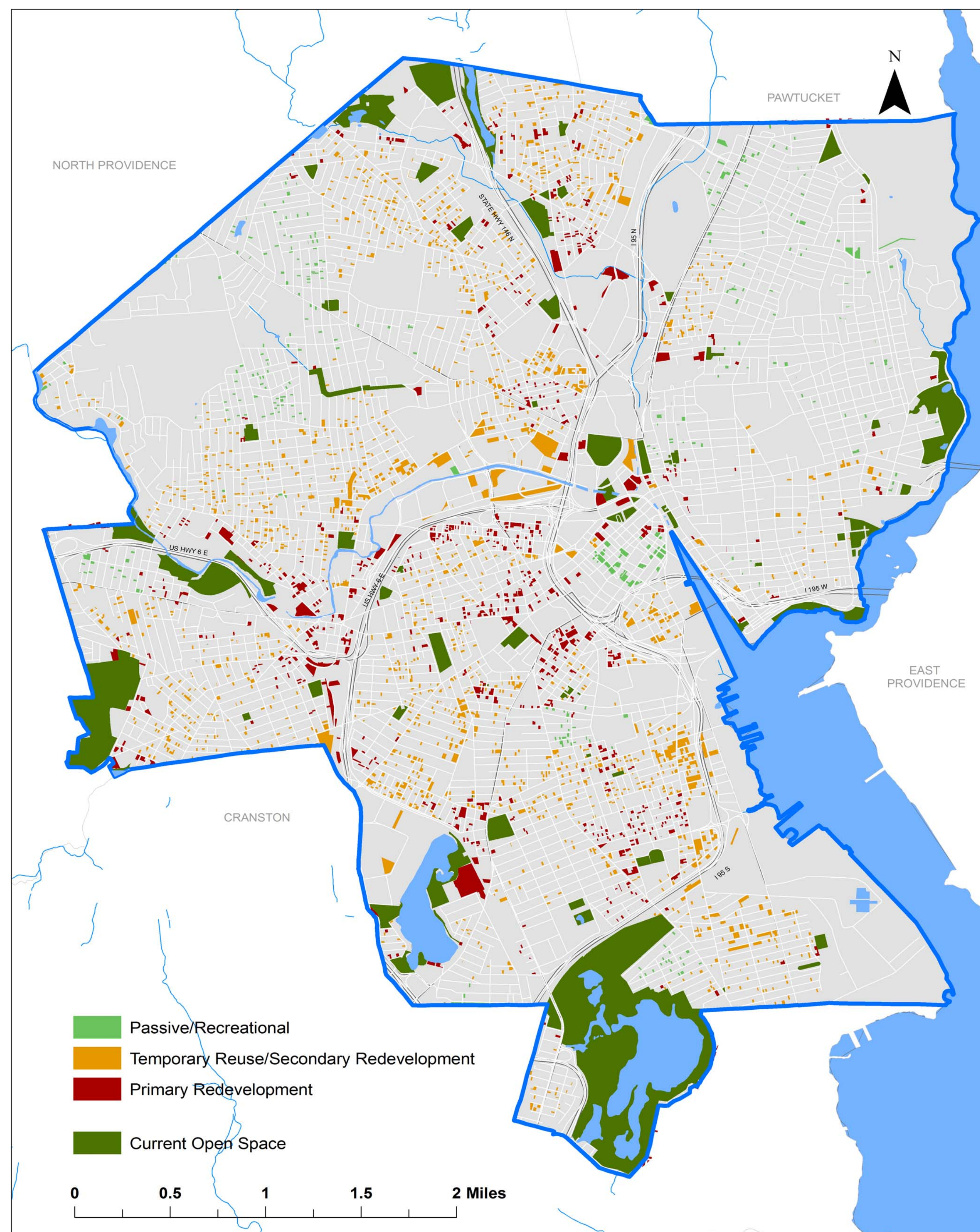


Vacant Lot Reuse Analysis of Providence, Rhode Island



Vacant lots are abundant in Providence. Despite the city's efforts to implement regulations in the late 1990's aimed to reduce the number of vacant properties, and improve the quality and maintenance of the remaining vacant lots, parcel data from 2009 categorized 4617 lots as vacant. These abandoned properties have major negative implications for the surrounding community and serve as a barrier to neighborhood revitalization.

Proposed Future Land Use



Methodology

Vacant lots have immense potential to revitalize communities. This GIS analysis highlights the potential for these vacant properties by proposing a future land use based on lot size, neighborhood income level, and distance to land that is already dedicated as open space. Lots located on steep slopes with hazardous soils conditions and lots located within the floodplain were excluded from this analysis. Vacant lots that abut other vacant lots were aggregated together to reflect the true potential for the area. Large properties or properties located in low income areas, that are also close to open space are classified as opportunities for redevelopment in order to capitalize on lot size and stimulate the area with development, where open space is already accessible. Properties with smaller lots or lots located in higher income areas, farther from open space are classified as areas dedicated to passive open space. Vacant lots that did not meet the criteria for either passive reuse or redevelopment are classified as temporary reuse and secondary development opportunities.

Redevelopment could include a wide variety of uses such as affordable housing, residential, commercial, and mixed-use development. Passive lands might be utilized for parks, recreational fields or courts, community gardens, or locations for public art installations. Temporary reuse opportunities could include locations for special events such as farmers markets, locations for interim skate parks, and locations that could be used in partnership with local schools or non-profits willing and able to maintain the land and use it on a temporary basis.

This analysis provides a snapshot of the potential for productive uses at these vacant lots throughout the city, and sheds light on the large-scale threat of blight caused by the abundance of vacant lots. Ultimately, final plans for future uses of these parcels should be addressed at a neighborhood level and based on a community needs assessment. By understanding the attributes of these vacant lots in terms of the surrounding neighborhoods, the city may be able to develop policies and programs that guide these lots to more productive uses quickly. Progressive policy could support the transformation of these lots into neighborhood assets.

Future Land Use Potential

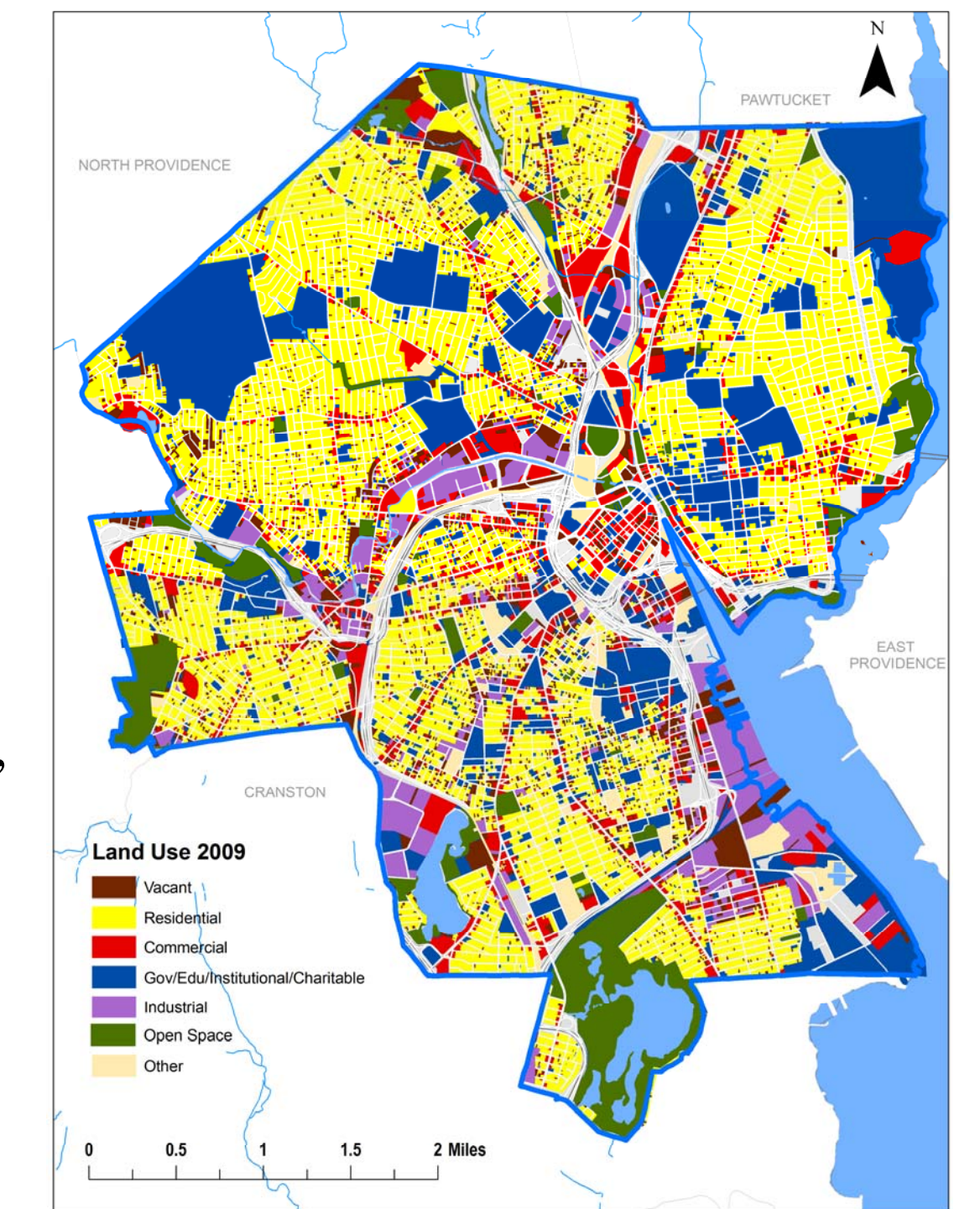
Passive/Recreational: 349 parcels

Temporary Reuse: 1625 parcels

Redevelopment: 643 parcels

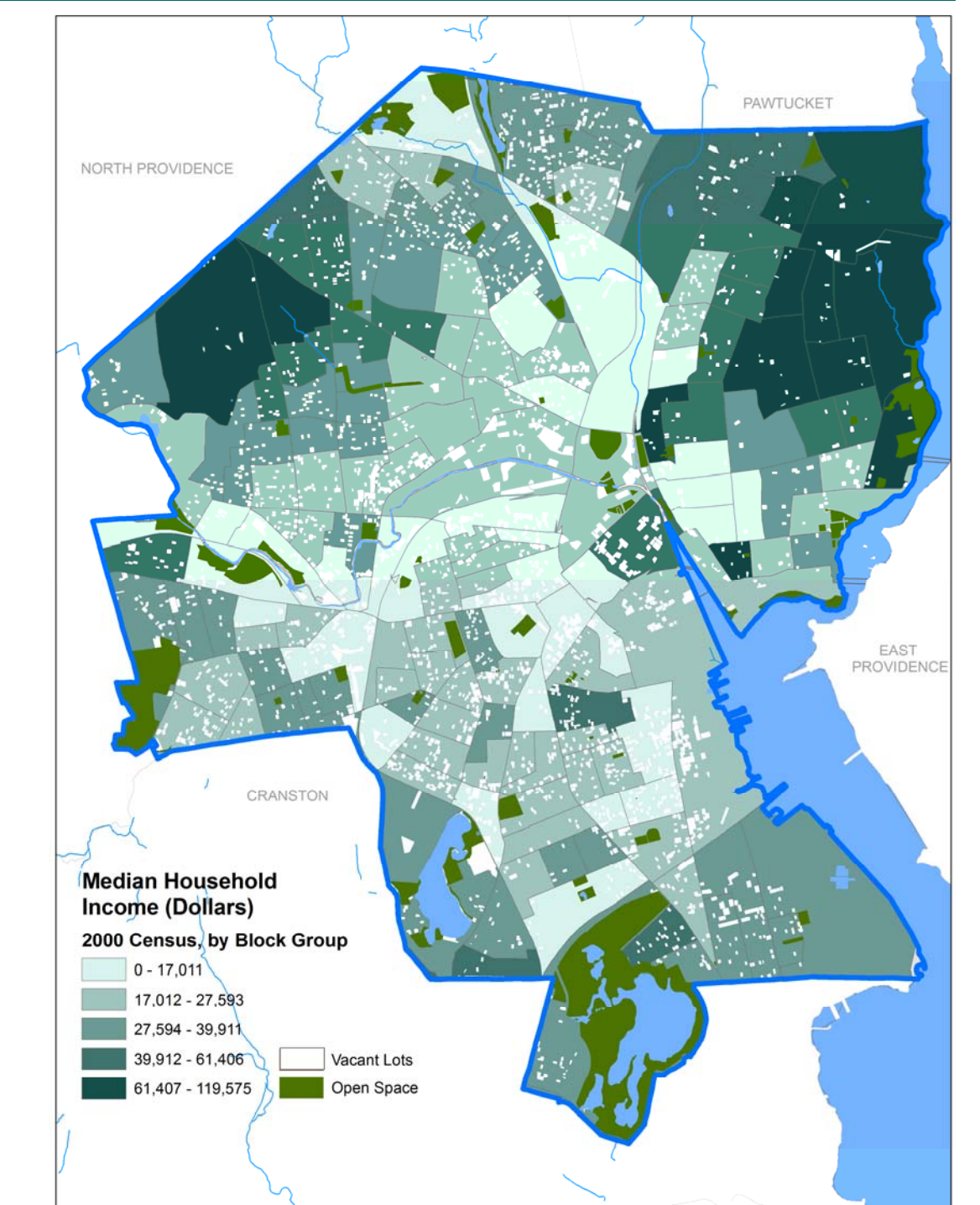
Vacant Lot Size

Providence has a great deal of land dedicated to residential and government/educational uses. Commercial land use, and open space are far less prevalent. The top two quintiles of lot size for existing commercial development exceeds 7,000 square feet. Parcels larger than this size were classified as locations for future redevelopment. In contrast, the smallest lot size for an existing residential unit is 1,350 square feet. Lots smaller than this size were classified as locations for future passive uses.



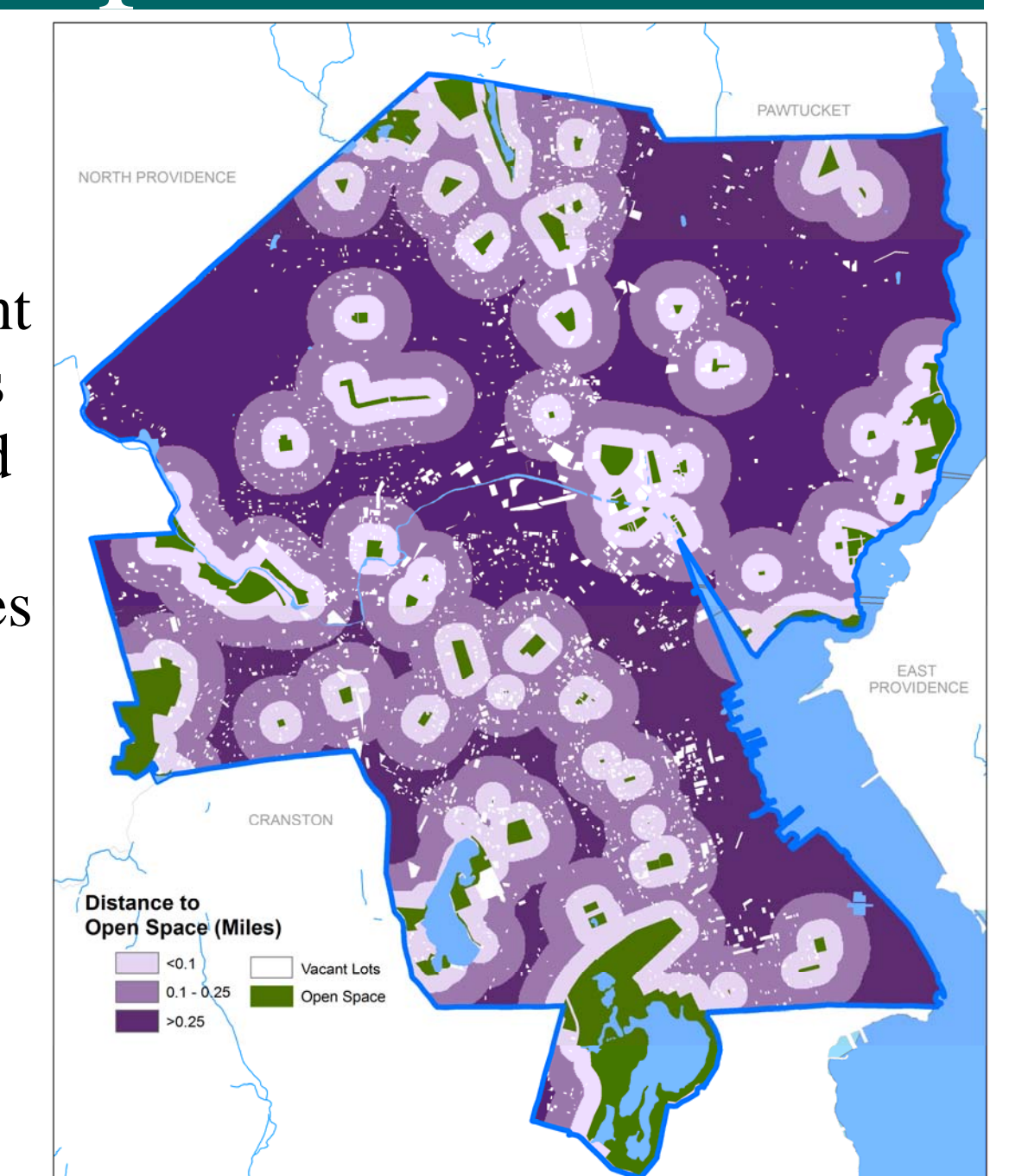
Income Analysis

In this map, area median income levels from the 2000 census are categorized by block group. Vacant lots primarily fall within low income neighborhoods. Redevelopment of vacant lots within these lower income areas presents the opportunity for neighborhood revitalization. Lots within the lowest income bracket were classified as areas for future redevelopment. Alternatively, those vacant lots located within neighborhoods in the top two household income brackets were classified as future passive use opportunities.



Distance to Open Space

Many properties in Providence are located within a quarter mile of existing open space. However, considering the large number of vacant properties throughout the city, there is still opportunity to dedicate more land to passive open space. Smaller lots, and lots located further than 0.25 miles from open space were classified as locations for future passive uses. Larger vacant lots, closer than 0.1 miles to existing open space were classified as locations for future redevelopment.



Cartographer: Alyssa Rosen, May 2011
Projected Coordinate System:
NAD 1983 State Plane Rhode Island FIPS 3800, Feet
Sources: RI GIS, MassGIS, U.S. Census Bureau, Providence Plan