

The Industrial and Commercial Buildings District in Providence, Rhode Island

Understanding the Need for Neighborhood Redevelopment

Background Information



Atlantic Mills, Olneyville

The Industrial and Commercial Buildings District (ICBD) was created in partnership by the City of Providence and the Providence Preservation Society. The buildings included in the district reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history. This district has been designed to provide the documentation necessary to consider the sites for inclusion in the new Providence Industrial and Commercial Historic District. Ongoing work is being done to identify more industrial sites of concern throughout the city.

The Need for Change

Many of the ICBD sites exist in the more impoverished neighborhoods of Providence. These sites are unique and valuable, however at the same time, many are in disrepair and can contribute to the blight in these neighborhoods. This project shows that there is a relationship between the neighborhoods containing these sites and their housing characteristics and demographics. While there are obviously many other factors that affect these neighborhoods, the data from this project can help to encourage positive change.



Louttit Laundry, West End

Through redevelopment and community involvement, the ICBD sites can be transformed—what was once blight can become a valuable community asset.

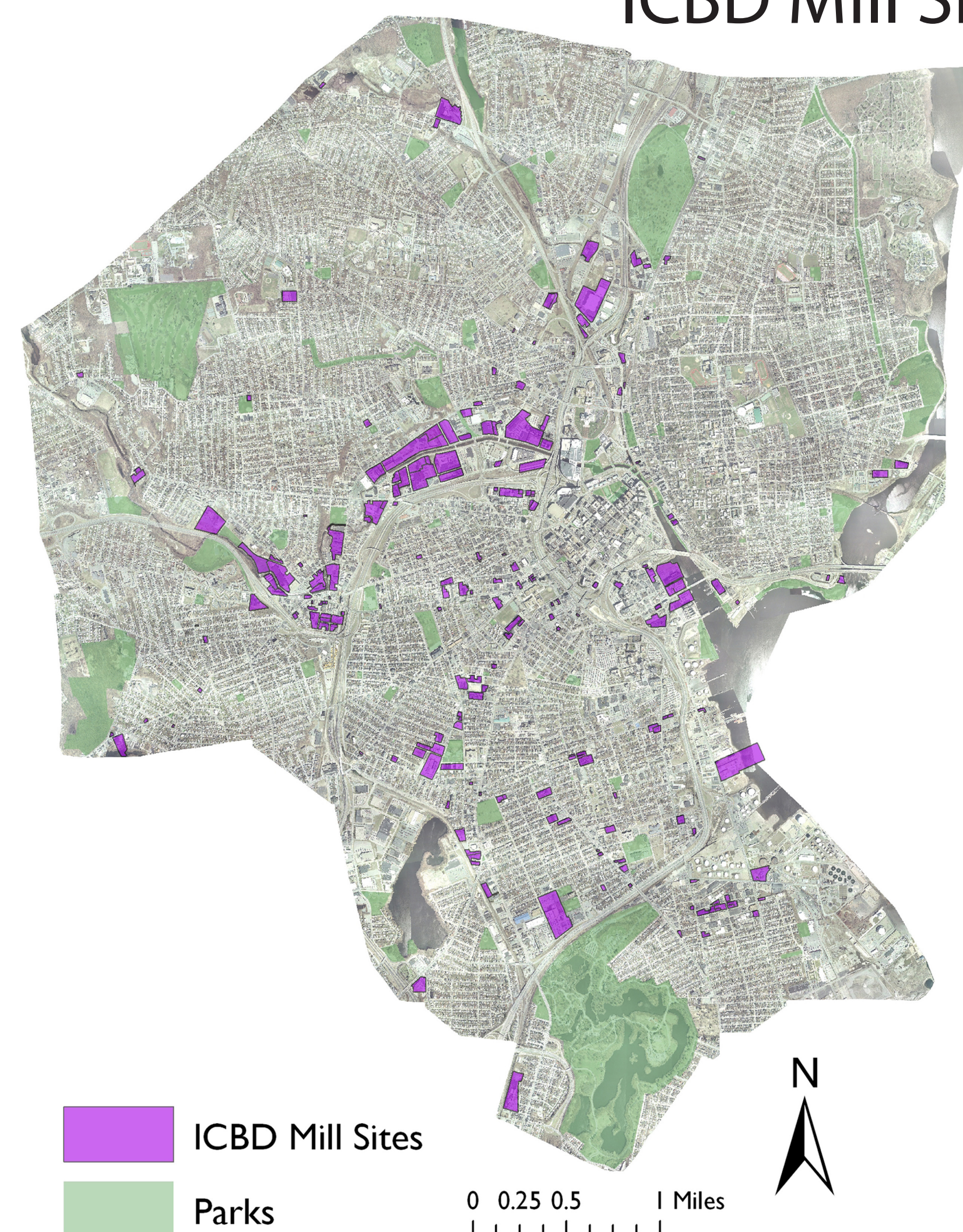


New England Butt Company, West End

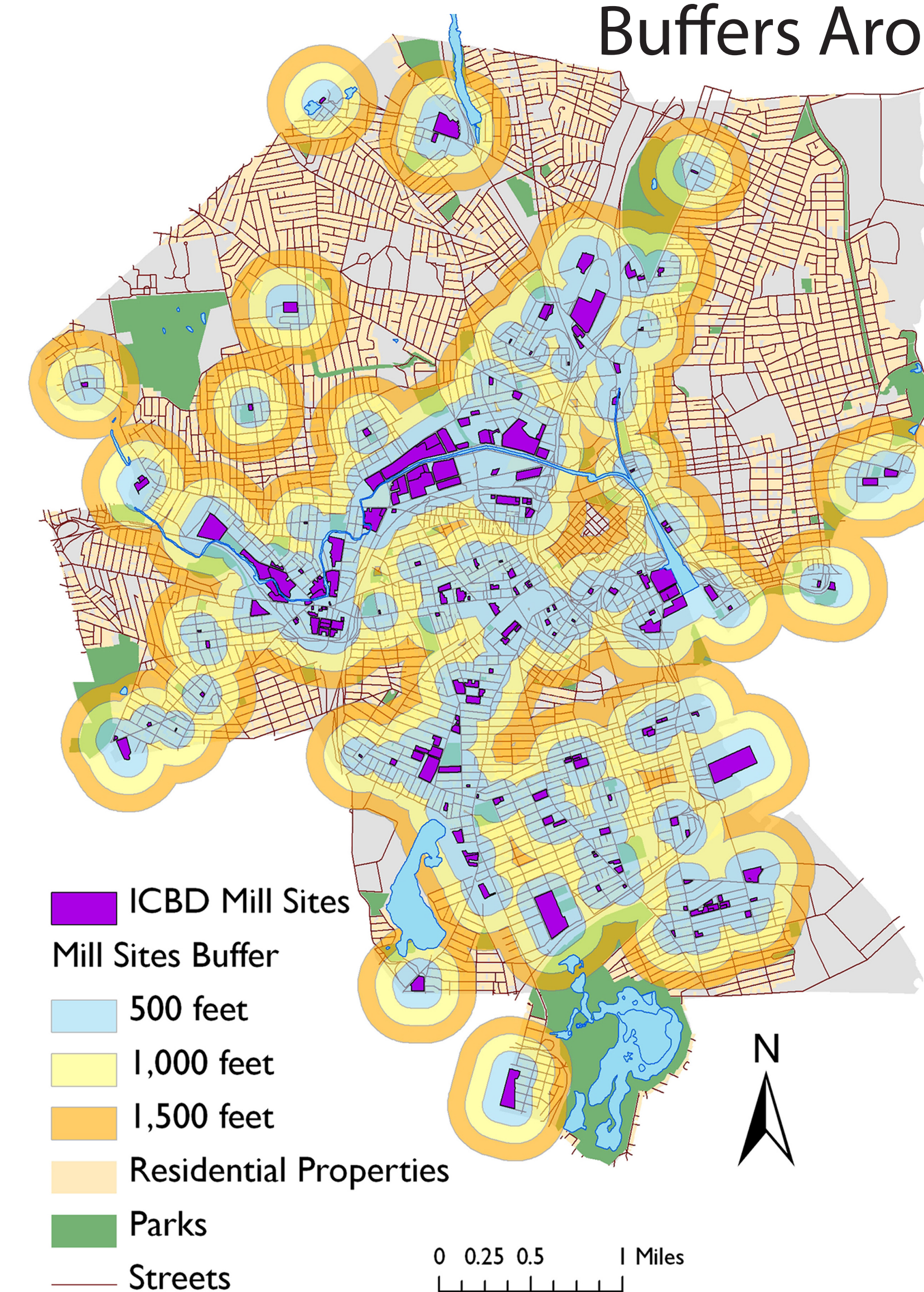
Cleaning and redeveloping the ICBD sites cannot guarantee transformation in these neighborhoods, but some positive change is likely. More importantly, if redevelopment occurs on these sites, it is crucial that the neighborhood residents are involved in the planning process. If the sites are to truly benefit their neighborhood, the services or amenities offered should focus on and be available to the adjacent community.

Sources- The Providence Plan and Rhode Island GIS
Map Projection- NAD 1983 State Plane Rhode Island
Photos courtesy of the Providence Plan

ICBD Mill Sites



Buffers Around Mill Sites



Housing Value Data

Collected from the ICBD Buffers

Data	500 Feet	1000 Feet	1500 Feet	Outside Buffer
# of Houses	5,132	6,419	5,485	11,621
Percent of Total Houses	18%	22%	20%	40%
Median House Value	\$256,143	\$267,924	\$282,491	\$352,526
Median Value of Land	\$76,984	\$85,561	\$96,513	\$127,027
Median Value of Improvements	\$179,159	\$182,362	\$185,977	\$225,547
Median House Age	182 years	152 years	135 years	121 years

Overview of Maps and Data

There is a clear divide between the neighborhoods of Providence.

As you move farther away from the ICBD sites the demographics of the neighborhoods change dramatically. The majority of the population living near the sites is non-white and a large portion of this group is Hispanic. In many of the ICBD neighborhoods the median household income is below the poverty level. As shown in the chart above, the farther away houses are from the ICBD sites, the more valuable they and their land become. In general, the older housing in the city is also located near the sites.

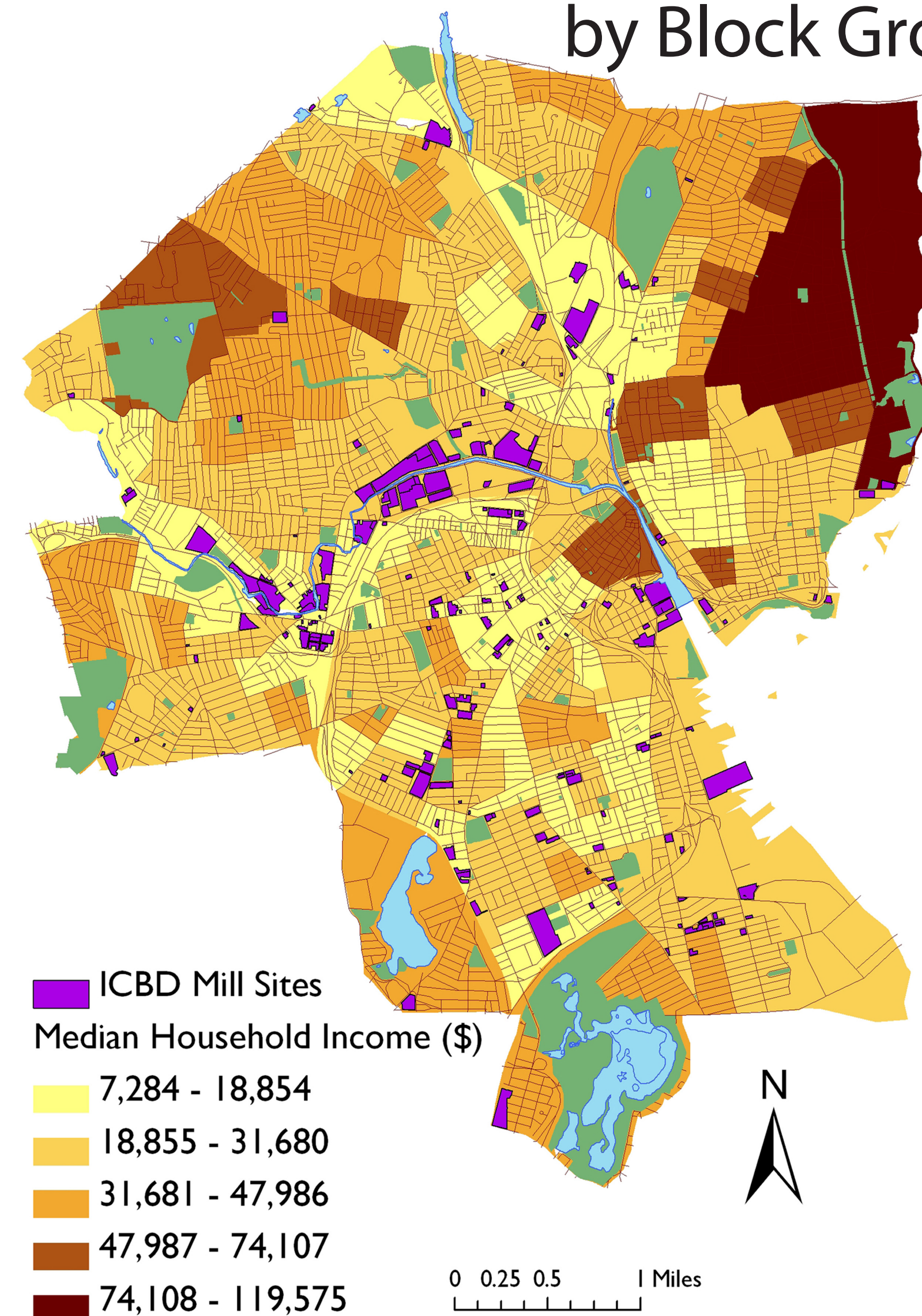
The redevelopment of the ICBD sites may not solve the problems in these communities, but action should be taken to restore these historic structures and put them to use for the neighborhoods in which they are located. It will be crucial that the focus be on the neighborhood residents, as displacement and gentrification can occur from this type of redevelopment.



Wanskuk Hall, North Providence

Cartographer- Julia Wolfson Gold
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Median Household Income by Block Group



Dominant Race by Block

