

LEADERSHIP
RHODE ISLAND

THE
GREATEST
LIL'
STATE
ON
EARTH

OCTOBER 24TH AT
RHODES ON THE PAWTUXET



LEADERSHIP RHODE ISLAND

October 24, 2015

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2015 Lambda II Class

LEADERSHIP RHODE ISLAND: THE GREATEST LIL' STATE ON EARTH

Overview

Background

Leadership Rhode Island (LRI) is completing year two (2015) of a five year project entitled: *Make Rhode Island Stronger*. The first year of the project (2014) set the stage by canvassing the state of Rhode Island for those people who effected positive change while determining what kinds of characteristics marked their actions. These findings culminated in the publication of a book entitled: Crossing the Line, profiling 61 individuals who made a marked difference in Rhode Island because of their work.

Alongside this effort, was the launching of LRI's ambitious StrengthsFinder initiative, based on the positive psychology research of Donald Clifton, and predicated on the theory of human development which focuses on individual talents rather than personal deficits. During the pilot phase of 2014, LRI administered 1,000 StrengthsFinder assessments, while having an overall goal of conducting 10,000 profiles by 2020. LRI staff and coaches were trained in conducting the profiles, using the methodology, which included training sessions with employees at work sites (public, private and nonprofit) in Rhode Island.

The Greatest 'Lil State on Earth

In 2015, year two of Make Rhode Island Stronger, LRI launched the most aggressive community outreach effort in its history under the theme of *Recasting Rhode Island*. With a goal of reaching all 39 cities and towns during the course of the year, to learn about community assets and community issues, LRI looked at Rhode Island through a "hyper-local" lens. Kicking the year off in January with a keynote talk by Mark Dunkelman, author of The Vanishing Neighbor, followed by the LRI class of 2015 (the 35th class offered consecutively since LRI's inception in 1981) conducting 33 community based meetings in 19 cities and towns across Rhode Island during the late winter and spring, then celebrated with a massive open to all neighborhood block party – "HI Neighbor" – in June, hosted by LRI at the Steel Yard in Providence, and culminating in the recently held statewide community convening on October 24, 2015 – at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet – entitled: *The Greatest 'Lil State on Earth*. The community convening welcomed 800 people to talk about strengths, assets, and issues facing each city and town in Rhode Island.

During 2015, LRI's StrengthsFinder initiative continued apace, conducting another 1,000 + profiles, while offering 21 coaching sessions, and 16 on site employee workshops. Tying StrengthsFinder and the importance of the expansion of social networks to the October 24th community convening were keynotes given by Jim Clifton, Gallup CEO, and Mark Dunkelman.

Findings

As a result of this year long effort to look at Rhode Island from a micro-level, two sets of findings are being reviewed in this report, the first set based on the initial 33 community meetings hosted earlier in the year by the Lambda II Class of 2015, and the second set of findings based on notes from 64 table discussions held at the community convening on October 24, 2015. While each data set contains a vast amount of raw material, this report focuses on the top issues within each data set, meaning those issues receiving the greatest number of citations. Each list is in descending order of number of citation received.

Data Set # 1

"Hi Neighbor" meetings conducted in late winter, early spring, 2015. Thirty three meetings conducted representing approximately 500 attendees hosted in locations in 19 cities and towns resulted in a list of 1,222 community assets. The following list offers broad categories identified as being local strengths:

- Local/small business
- Education
- Sports and Recreation
- Civic Groups
- Faith/Religious Groups
- Individual Champions
- Neighborhood Associations
- Arts and Culture Groups
- Community Organizations
- Travel/Tourism
- Environment
- Restaurants/Food

Data Set # 2

"Greatest 'Lil State on Earth" convening on October 24, 2015. Sixty-four sets of notes reviewed. The following list identifies the top areas of discussion based on table discussions framed around issues of importance to quality of life in local communities:

- Public Education /higher education
- Environment /Open Space/Parks/Bike Paths/Coastline/Beaches
- Community connections/meet ups/associations /neighbors
- Arts/Culture/Heritage/History
- Collaboration/Partnerships/Alliances/Leverage strengths/Networking
- "Main Street/scale/small town/village/main street/livability
- Youth Groups/Associations/After School Programs
- Business/employment/economic development/internships/workforce
- Food, restaurants, farmers markets, gardens
- Diversity, immigrants, minorities, ethnicities
- Infrastructure/Public Services
- Affordable housing

Analysis

When reviewing the two locally driven data sets, there is congruence between the two especially in the areas of:

- Education
- Environment
- Economy
- Arts/Culture/Heritage
- Food/Restaurants
- Neighborhood/Community/Civic Groups
- Youth Sports/Recreation

Evaluation

Based on 151 responses via Survey Monkey there was a very positive sentiment regarding:

- Continuing with the effort
- Having value for the participant
- Impact of the event on participant

After the event, 44 percent of participants reported having a strongly positive attitude toward Rhode Island versus 20 percent before, and 37 percent reported a strongly positive feeling about their local community after the event, versus 19 percent before. Participants also reported substantial increases in understanding their own strengths and those of their local communities.

Conclusion

Leadership Rhode Island intends to use the findings of its community engagement and StrengthsFinder efforts throughout 2015 as follows:

- Assisting with curriculum design and content for its core leadership program for 2016
- Helping to determine focus of LRI community based project work for 2016
- Continuing to pursue StrengthsFinder initiative, i.e., introducing profile to at least 1000 additional Rhode Islanders and offering orientations on at least 30 worksites in 2016
- Identifying possible projects at the local level, already ongoing, that could use assistance from LRI in 2016

LRI has chosen as its theme for 2016, *The Mission Continues*. Since 1981 LRI has offered its leadership program yearly and now counts over 2000 adults in its alumni ranks. Having added a College Leadership Program, over 300 college students have graduated from CLRI since 2004. LRI is dedicated to producing servant leaders for the state of Rhode Island and looks forward in 2016 to extending this proud tradition into its 36th year.

For further information about LRI, please visit our website at: www.leadershipri.org or call us at 401.273.1574.

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**All data unedited*

RHODE ISLAND

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- You can meet leaders - connectedness (consolidation)
- Authenticity and uniqueness of Providence - our city retains character (history, rural community, artistic community)
- Rhode Island second most densely populated state, "however living in Providence you can't beat the sense of change from one city to another"
- Physical beauty and diversity
- Diversity (ex. ethnic diversity)
- Good scale for "testing"/"piloting" - "the years I've been working in the beverage industry, RI is used as a test market"
- Friendliness
- Size of the state allows for more potential for growth : personal and professional growth when compared to NYC or MA
- Identity is a major strength - charm, pride, passionate about topics in our state
- Higher education opportunities - research
- Geographic footprint
- History of business
- Jewelry
- Texas Instruments
- Community pride
- Education institutions – colleges – strong historic education base
- Farming and sustainability
- Diverse population – land and space
- Infrastructure – roads and rail
- School system and community
- Good town economics – location
- Young vibrant – everyone welcome
- "The world in every block"
- "If you have a need, you can spread it with someone and it shows up"
- Renovating itself, after Texas Instruments downsized
- Used its resources to renovate
- Suburban hub
- Diversity – encouraging diversity
- Heritage festivals

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- RI has very good jobs, and it also has very low paying jobs and not much in the middle. - Until we can bring back the middle economic job structure we won't be able to equal out taxes. - Working a higher job will rarely allow you to interact with someone in another economic class (middle ring)
- We need more jobs, more companies
- Affordability : homes, education, school
- Not a fan of subsidizing government
- High- quality high paying jobs
- No existent bridge between African-American and Hispanic communities, minorities in the general sense
- Services, not knowing what opportunities are available
- Improving race relations
- Bureaucracy - mishaps in state government: misuse of funds, where are "the checks and balance"
- Raise leaders
- Tax structure - we are one of the highest taxed states impeding job opportunities
- "In Rhode Island the average firehouse doesn't support even a third of what another firehouse in another would normally provide."
- Size can be a challenge
- "Addiction to failure"
- Lost self-esteem
- Looks past the good things
- "Oh, it's Rhode Island"
- The effort it takes to spread the good news
- Weather
- The cost of living is high
- Resources to the school system
- Attracting new business
- Lack of inclusion of community
- Benefits highly localized
- Soloed community
- Provincialized
- Division starts on Football field caving on to business

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Too much favoritism in state government. By giving a 3% raise all across the board people making a lot of money will make more than people who are making less. It is a lot easier to start a business because "you know a guy" than when you try to start a business and you are from out of state.
- Healthy community with an education system that produces a skilled work force
- Improvement in policy - efficient techniques to better government

- Environmental improvements
- Maximize state potential
- More opportunities for everyone at every level (employment opportunities)
- Freedom for minorities and youth - reduce the fear of minority youth to explore opportunities in the state.
- Diversity in government in Rhode Island - how does somebody in any minority community become a representation of the population in RI.
- "Disheartening at the low amount of individuals who voted" [people do not understand the value of voting]
- Less lean governance, more affordable education.
- To be a place where a majority of our food is produced locally and regionally.
- Reestablish connections between people, generations, environments and our food to provide health economic stability.
- After school programs, mentoring - without educating youth in general they cannot thrive.
- Teaching people to how to farm and grow their own natural food - techniques to improve health benefits
- Know your strengths – continuous
- Impact and share curiosity
- Continuity – do not be modest in sharing
- Business support structures for start up
- Community reinvestment to help small entrepreneurs
- More business funding
- More effective use of the “state identity”

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Community leaders who are dedicated to making a difference, committed to every community.
- You need mentors (after-school programs) : connections are necessary to help change our government.
- Effort to encourage our leaders to bring change.
- Increase in child attendance in higher institutions
- We need to encourage children, all children to attend school
- Increase our networking abilities, bridge a gap between all individuals to offer more opportunities
- Power of yes. "Yes I'm going to show up, Yes I am going to contribute, YES, I'm going to be a role model"
- Our communities working together and contributing to one another to improve problems that they face locally
- Encouraging our youth to attend school, and seek a higher education. Parents need to instill in children the value of an education, and how receiving an education is fun.
- Localization versus globalization.
- people in the community should come together like this and share ideas
- There are too many sets of rules in different communities. There should be an effort to make rules uniform statewide- zoning regulations, etc.

- Privatization. AAA works better for DMV services than the DMV itself.
- Need to get people engaged. People get disaffected and shut down. City Council is closed-minded. Need to elect people who will actually listen.
- each community needs to inventory its own strengths and capitalize on them
- We should care more about the state as a whole and less about our individual communities. Recognize that our futures are tied in together.
- Be optimistic and persistent
- Important ideas of convening

EXETER, HOPKINTON, NARRAGANSETT, NEWPORT RICHMOND, WEST GREENWICH

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Independence
- Local focus
- Leisure
- small development has relationships with their neighbors and keep a close relationship with one another
- coming together as a community to not raise taxes
- promote assists of the state
- small businesses helping each other out and enjoying the beauty attractions that are not advertised as much
- think locally and shop at places within the city
- Public school system – close community, PTA, well-rated
- Green space
- Community Events
- Nature trails waterfront
- School system, rigor of programs facilities are nice
- Beautiful beaches in Newport
- Newport school system allow arts to have influence in the school system
- Knowing all neighbors – community/neighbor acceptance
- Diverse use of land – broad range/wide variety diversity
- Geography – always wanted to live on the water
- Location is a breath of fresh air, sunrises
- Simplicity of small town

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- How do you get from people outside of RI to spend money in RI
- How do you support Swamp Yankee Days for example and how do you get the advertisement out to let the right people know about the event
- Too many non-profits having similar organizations not working together which dilutes the state financially
- Not having that much affordable housing
- Would be nice to see more community events offered by the Town Hall
- Lack of strategy for a town plan for economic development, vision/plan not well communicated or even developed
- Town government has lost its competence (town manager , Mudge), Mom & Pop stores disappearing

- Lack of established sewer system
- Lack of town sewers/treatment plants
- State makes more money off business that owners do
- Re-imagine what needs are in a main street economy (European model)
- People need to come in as trade dealers
- Not an even mix of age ranges, vacancies of 20-50 year olds, need an even mix
- Need local transportation around the town – local trollies. Public transportation takes over an hour
- Need hotels/restaurants
- Excessive traffic between RI areas
- Lack of metros
- Block Island's last trust – NK needs this to preserve land
- Issue with traffic safety, Route 4, traffic and accidents. Fear for kid's lives
- Can't keep lumber shops in business if you go to Home Depot
- Participation in political processes of the town. Residents feel as though opinions don't matter
- Limited participation in local government
- Community does dialogue around complex issues vs quantity issues, diversity of discussion vs lacking
- Town centralized the level of service without tax increase or increased tax base. Too much being cut
- Services not implemented correctly
- Identity crisis – too much development changing the identity of NK, where is center of town?
- Communication between city entities
 - i.e. Town Court, School Department, School Board, Fire, Police
- In NE land to get to know people. Harder to make relationships
- Civic engagement needs to be fine tuned
- People need to get out and engage in the community

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- more recreational opportunities
- teaching our kids how to live through shelter and how to live (the basics)
- transportation being more functional
- have more areas designated for certain outdoor activities like snowmobiling or four wheeling that don't have that infrastructure
- Way to engage people who are in high school/out of high school (young people can get involved in), plugging young people into activities, programs, trails
- Ownership by the community
- Civic engagement that's cool
- Establish a social network
- Centralized communication system, no community of people that communicate with one another – united community
- Lack of sidewalks

- Earth day – town-wide clean up/energy saving
- Garbage from Route 4 on sidewalk from URI students
- Post Road Corridor – disaster
 - Vision so that it is walkable
 - Transportation to connect three major areas
- More commuter resources – disconnected from rest of the state
- Someone to cordate the town government so they are working together for economic development
- Ways to engage community and build relationships

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Have URE Outfitters coming together and advertising hiking trails within the area
- Having places for college students to come together as a social place or a study/workplace
- Town hall meetings not just being all political and have listening campaigns to what the community would like to see different
- Richmond/Wyoming Arcadia YMCA being located in a strip mall and doesn't have room to expand for a pool, more rooms, and updated equipment. Also is a bit run down.
 - Due to location and other issues mentioned above, possibly shutting it down and using the money elsewhere in the community.
- More events to explore this
- Random things to get everyone to meet up
- What's the role of the Chamber of Commerce?
- Library hours and student art exhibits, student/community center
- We all get together and drive change
- Make connections; drive change networking and conversations starters
 - Start your own committee
- Being more involved + push forward positive thinking
- Community organizer to drive local info out, no one knows when meetings take place

BARRINGTON

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Lives in Barrington for the past 5 years. Went out of state for 15 years, came back to RI. Chose RI because of the school system. Proud of his choice.
- Lived in Barrington for 8 years. Husband is lifelong Barrington-er. Likes the small community the quietness and proximity. Grew up in Cranston, didn't like how busy it was. Likes the tranquility.
- Lived in Barrington for 20 years. Become a Rhode Islander. Has consistent list of friends for years. 18 years, keeping stable relationships. Very safe and secure. People from all over the place, yet it's still homie and consistent.
- Lived in Barrington since 78. Influx of people makes a big difference in education. Size of Barrington is a strength, community sense and having a lot of people in that middle ring.
- Miriam's husband, hah. Strength is value towards education.
- Lifelong resident of Rhode Island, went to school with Steve P's cousin. Strength of Barrington is the safety and hospitality. Knowing neighbors and being comfortable walking around town.
- Lived in Barrington for 10 years, from Mass. What she found interesting is how attractive Barrington is, and the influx of people. People want to live there and are attracted to living there.
- People in town, involved. A lot of volunteers but always looking for more. Story about cleaning out his parent's house, found something listing random people getting together in the community.
- Works in Barrington does not live in Barrington. Steve P is her boss's boss. Barrington is very well run, fiscally stable, beautiful and customer centric. Hospitality is key." Fantastic place to be"

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Because the town is so school centric, people are forced to be engaged. How do you know about some of the other things going in outside of the school system?
- Challenge for Barrington is how busy people are, not active in community. Great potential if people were more active in the school system and community. Husband left and came back.
- Biggest challenge is "Barrington bubble". Lives in a world where everyone is the same social-economically. Children don't know how to adapt to other environments because of their growing up.
Pressure comes from the parents; the students are comfortable with their status but their parents want more. In the 70's when she was campaigning, there were low amount of families with children. "When are we going to get condos and apartments" Watched friends go to Bristol and Warren. It became too family-based, versus yielding to the adult lifestyle.
- Not only a Barrington challenge, but there's an atmosphere of pressure to be successful. You HAVE to be involved, students and adults as well. Business is good in a way but challenging

because you're doing it not for the relationships. Wrapped up in the business. "Doing, doing, and doing it, versus making relationships" People come back to Barrington, positive.

- Community activities are very school centric. Being an adult without children is extremely difficult. The town lacks a "community downtown" Downtown is more of a thruway verses a place to congregate. "We don't stroll in Barrington" You can't walk on sidewalks because of shrubbery.
- Challenge would be the high expectations. Schools are pushing students to be better and better, a lot of stress and pressure. How do you balance those high expectations?
- Trying to keep all the good things in Barrington. Not staying in a bubble. Adapting to social and economic changes. More cottages and condos are being built to keep people in, in relation to Terri's question. "Not a done deal, but it's in the works"

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- The one area on 114, is an area for people to co-mingle. Would like to improve way finding and signage or educate people on what Barrington has.
- Agreed that the beach is a great place to mingle. Wants to improve Barrington beach access. Does NOT want to see access open to the public outside of Barrington. Delivery services for all sorts of people.
- Two specific things: Town events are great on the beach, so much fun! Large variety of demographics and ages. (Wishes it was like that when her kids are growing up) Wants to improve sidewalks and commuter areas. Foot traffic is limited. It's expensive, but it would improve overall health of children and commuters.
- Beef up the playground areas. Times have changed. Trying to accommodate to the older crowd, because there's nothing to do with them. Senior centers outside of Barrington have much more to do. The town is small enough to develop senior programs. People want to stay in their houses and do things. Boston created a service that maintains a comfortable lifestyle for senior citizens. People don't need to move out; they can continue to live in their house, with assisted living services. Online delivery services are excellent and a big asset. People don't want multi-family condos, or do they?
- A vision would be to help the access to the beach. Policeman's cove is such an access to the ocean, also educating and community based. Concerts on the beach. Assets for other people, breaking down the bubble.
- Talked about an experience with a hit and run, because of the lack of sidewalk area.
- Policeman's cove project is great. Place to sit and hangout is excellent. Likes the renovation of the beach. HUGE asset and is looking gorgeous. Has a vision for a playground area at the beach, similar to the library. Agreed that there are no pedestrian traffic areas. Shared story on her daughter's experience struggling to bike to school. Kids are educated on foot traffic and bike traffic but adults are not.
- After 5pm, outsiders do have access to the beach. The vision that many people talked about is already in the works. (I think he works for the town). Housing is in the works, and senior capabilities are also a hot topic. "The only housing plan for seniors is whatever is in the comprehensive plan"
- Area that does need attention is definitely the seniors. Barrington has senior centers, and services, but does not do enough to help seniors. Children of those folks do not know what to

do with their parents. Bus drivers and insurance do not have the means to take care of seniors. Not enough assistance. Look into senior population and adjust to their needs.

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- People want to stay in Barrington but do not want to stay in their 4+ bedroom houses. Condos are the answer.
- Catering to families who do not have children in school, start facilitating living for them. Not necessarily seniors, but families with adult children. Buy land, and create and invest in condos. Things need to be put in place to allow that to happen. Creating open meetings with committees would be beneficial. Wants to encourage transparency with the town.
- Changes are happening now. Way finding is an issue, but it's being solved. People are engaged and making changes. Tap into the positive flow of execution.
- Sidewalk is about 15 feet into people's homes. Knocking down telephone and electrical poles, and working towards an underground power options.
- Creating an urban style condo living area. From town to the beach would be nice.
- Working on way finding options, and creating more public parking areas. Creating bike-lanes, and expanding and foot commuter options. Trying to develop a more inviting Downtown. All of these topics mentioned are already in the works. Proud to know that committees are in the works to tackle some of these issues. Streetscape and Police cove are excellent, and expanding. Senior services advisory committee. Committees have liaisons and direct connections towards making a change. Empowering residents to go to town council meetings.

BRISTOL

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Great community size - always seeing familiar faces
- Walkable town - communicate with people as your passing by or visiting a coffee shop
- Strong (community) relationships
- Historic preservation - preserves the history of RI
- Natural landscape (i.e. Colt State Park)
- Use of open space to create a sense of belonging
- Great place to spend time with family
- Great place for middle ring developing largely due to volunteerism
- Recreational opportunities
- Beautiful architecture
- Sense of security
- Deep roots (multiple generations of people)
- Quaint downtown areas
- Use of open space; natural beauty; sense of belonging through nature preserves and making them open to the public
- Beautiful open space; clean open area;
- Bristol is a wonderful place for middle ring relationship building
- Number of people volunteering - massive amount of retirees for volunteerism
- Lots of support for restaurants and local businesses
- Support and respect for armed services via 4th of July Parade
- Pride of owning a home; people are happy to be there
- Good sense of community policing
- Very rich Native American history
- Small town welcoming community feel; small town charm; neighborhood connection; bike path; colt state park; recreational community feel
- Came to Bristol though the military; historical; architecture; restaurants; large group of volunteers; sense of security
- 4th of July Parade – Greater support and respect for the military during this event; learned to respect the military living in Bristol
- Homeownership
- Bristol Animal Shelter
- Native American history; Metacom; Massasoit;
- Providing opportunities to bridge activities in the East Bay Area
- Celebrating the talents of the citizens
- Redesigned animal shelter - humane education center
- These strengths can be shared between nearby towns
- Trolen – Art night 1w/month
 - Brings people together and teaches about art in the area
 - Makes it “easier” for people to go in and learn – democratizes art

- Animal Shelter in Bristol
 - New education center
 - Could possibly help by expanding to Warren
 - What could Warren do to advance and build/strengthen “animal needs” to the Bristol/Warren region

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Bristol Teamwork and getting rid of old mentalities i.e. "you're not from Bristol so we have nothing in common"
- Large portion of the community isn't involved or aware of the resources available to them
- Problems with drugs - largely in the middle schools; currently at its worst
- Communications - websites are behind and not very informative
- Don't have a powerful system to get together as a group and discuss the needs of the town
- Large number of retirees that don't know how they can get involved
- Need a single place to put all volunteer opportunities
- You can out it out there but you need to get people motivated to do it
- Elizabeth McDowell brought up the idea of having the people at our table get together to discuss how to get more people involved in the town
- Teamwork
- Uninformed of the resources available within Warren-Bristol
- Drug problem (Warren-Bristol); Mentoring,
- Bristol-Warren websites not up-to-date with the current times
- Warren – Budget – too much overhead should be sharing services with Bristol/Barrington too much gout
- Bristol – large portion of community that don't know what resources are available
 - How to reach these people?
 - Drug problem
- Communications
 - Town websites both Bristol and Warren tend to be behind. Information is not always there when needed
- Score
 - Retired routines
- Could area groups teach web skills to keep websites (and other things) updated
- How can retirees be trained/educated on something new to contribute and feel valued
- How to communicate what is needed

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- See Bristol and Warren leverage each other's strengths
 - Warren should utilize everything Bristol has to offer It all starts at the town council level
 - Town councils should have greater collaboration - discuss what's good between the towns

- Continue to market everything Bristol has to offer - Make it a go to place
- Need to start mandatory recycling
- Collaboration across the board - efficient, economic development, community relations
- Town council should listen to the ideas of the citizens
- Capitalize strengths with Warren, Bristol, and Barrington. Combined services of the towns.
- Strengthen relationships among the two towns
- Leveraging ideas,
- Greater collaboration among town councils
- Animal Shelter (Separate but coordinated programs between Bristol/Warren)
- Reaching the large retiree population (volunteerism)
- More welcoming to visitors (tourists)
- Teamwork between towns (keep small town feel but grow the mentality)
- Mandatory recycling
- Collaboration across the board (more efficient, economic development)
- Appreciate the similarities
- More communication regarding volunteerism (town's website)
- Listing open volunteer positions on website (Bristol)
- More communication of the opportunities available (welcome packet, mailing campaign, etc.)
- Bristol, Warren, and Barrington leverage each other's strengths
 - Starts at town council level
 - Town council summit
 - Go to/travel to area built it up even more
- Team work between towns; keep small town feel; but "grow up the mentality"
 - Mandatory recycling
- Grassroots
 - East Bay collaborative

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Bristol Collaboration between communities - Bristol, Warren, Barrington
- Projects/organizations should reach out to other projects/organizations. It's hard to force a vision on everyone at once Is there a way to start an "East Bay Collaborative Movement"
- It would be beneficial to see members of town councils take part in the LRI program
- Joint effort among Bristol and Warren
- How do we make the towns become more collaborative?
- Grassroots
- Private organizations become involved with town councils (town vision)
- Participation between LRI and the two town councils
- Community leaders to facilitate collaboration

CENTRAL FALLS

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Blackstone Heritage Corridor Parks
- Great people
- Community of people
- First generation of immigrants
- Cultural influences
- Diversity
- Movies in the parks
- Chinese dragon boat races
- Respect for people who rebuild the old mills
- Great value in the rebuild buildings, many young professionals living there
- Taxes are low and it's a good investment opportunity
- School is improving so much
 - National Chess Championships for Central Falls High School
 - Wonderful teacher/chess coach has changed lives
 - CEO vs Central Falls chess team
 - Politicians vs Central Falls Chess Team

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Need a place for kids
- Neighborhoods don't have as many kids playing outside
- Need mentoring program after school to help kids with homework because parents aren't able to help them
- Parent's working so hard the parents don't get involved in community activities
 - There is a major language barrier
- Tight budget

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it – city/town/community/neighborhood – in the next three to five years?

- Should Chess be part of the curriculum?
 - Life coaching
- Maybe a huge school police cadet academy
- Work with police for sports
- Community centers
 - So many things can be done there
- A new train station because there are many people that don't have transportation to jobs
 - Connect to Boston for new young professionals
- Mall and retail areas that are owned by people who can make the necessary improvements
 - Realistic expectations

- Have a contact person in the city

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Set up a follow up community meeting and talk about what can benefit their local community

CHARLESTOWN

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Revitalization of town – outs community
- Town taxes low
- Presentation of waterfront
 - Versus Providence
 - What about Boston presenting Bay
 - Similar to Chicago
- Quality of Life
- Comradery of businesses
 - Business Association

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- No town center
- No little community to come together
- Too many high ranks/breaks up town and road

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Young people want to be in Sand County
 - No brain drain
- Community center
- More affordable housing
- Better restaurants
- More people outside of Westerly/Charlestown to come live here
- Better quality of life
- Pull people from NY to bring their skills, talents, and diversity
- Sell the quality of life, Rhode Island needs to sell the quality of life
- More people to think outside of the box

COVENTRY

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- The athletic programs are fun for the kids.
- The town is able to get together really well at sporting events.
- The games were good social events for the parents and the community.

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- People can't provide a service they would like to and make a living wage.
- Coventry is also experiencing economic challenges, many of the smaller shops are closed. The fire districts are facing organizational challenges. The political culture is very insular, heavily relying on "old boy" networks.

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Fiscal stability. When you don't have it, it is hard to think ahead. For the town to work with bordering towns and learn from the other ones to achieve financial stability.
- Coventry could benefit from promoting an active lifestyle, beautification, advertising public programs through the internet and publication of The Reminder. Advertising to other towns could bring revenue. Corporate alliances could offer access.

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- For the town to adapt some of what other towns are doing that is working.

CRANSTON

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Economic development with the Garden City Center- ex. influx of employment, retail industry
- Convenient setting with a little bit of everything- industry (Taco), shopping (Garden City), attractive for families
- closeness
- Garden City/Chapel view area (redevelopment)
- welcoming community
- family oriented neighborhood
- good public school system, good to raise family in
- good quality of life, safe, take great pride in community, maintain community and property
- Neighbors getting out and getting to know everyone unlike how Providence is so big. Suburbs vs. City life
- Walking in parks and running trails so being able to get out and enjoy nature; good sense of community
- (noticed that they were all telling each other different places to go in Cranston; connecting places they all knew and did not know)
- Community service, police, firefighter, school system
- Cranston senior center because this senior center model was a leader in the country. The first one started in Cranston and focusing on the seniors on the forefront. Would like other communities to learn from this model.
- CCAP Nonprofit organizations that focus on helping students who have dropped out of school.
- Sports programs in Cranston. Network of people within the recreational opportunities, where you have coaches that build on the community and not just focusing on the team. People count on each other. Parks and Recreation is a huge benefit to Cranston. Accessible Library, parks etc. Community Groups not just based for commerce because commerce was based on the community.
- Everything is in walking distance. Old area with no garage door opens so it opens up the community.
- Proximity to everything; convenient to get places, garden city bringing commerce, great neighborhoods, playgrounds
- Local festivals, advertising local events with street banners, has parking for events—better than providence, easy to navigate, activities to join
- Pawtuxet Village, lots of villages around Cranston, water proximity, proximity to city and beaches; people are nice, ocean on east, open space in west
- Families tend to stay in RI, including children tend to stay, makes for stronger community
- Ease of getting around, easy to get to other places in the state, arts—park theatre running again, good restaurants, good local entertainment
- Balance of geography—ocean and open space, small villages next to largest city; family/neighbor involvement (BASICS FB page)—takes a few people to have impact
- Libraries, parks and rec—great for kids, well-kept

- Able to replicate with “next door neighborhood” social media; orchestrate a neighborhood “tea”; block parties; need to invite people to come out of their houses.
- Municipal exchange about services like library and parks/rec
- Diversity
- community
- events (greek, library)
- Garden city
- Knew family by last name
- Growing diverse population and having events in the area that celebrates and educate the community about the culture
- Accept the fact that the cultures majority shifts and there will always be a need to educate people. Thankfully the people of Cranston are accepting
- Help build relationship based on last name association
- Center of RI in terms of highway location
- Great standing reputation
- The merge of different villages together to make Cranston
 - Ex: woods, city, urban, etc.
- Central place for major towns nearby that have their main buildings and activity hidden in areas
- Community crime watch meetings
- Everyone leaves but comes right back
- Community driven innovators
- Library
- Senior center
- Provide assistance to nearby areas who don't have all the right facilities
- Keep traditions but be willing to upgrade the service provided to the community
 - Ex: During the storm, people came to the library to charge and use Wi-Fi and now come back after that
- Work alongside local non-profit
 - Ex: Shelters provide CV workshops
- Make programs that were usually available for some now available for all
 - College classes
- “Community Stroll” see what is in Cranston by walks
- Active on social media
- Repurpose old building and acknowledge what it was and build on its legacy or develop its new legacy
- Cranston print work site – possible location to develop more community events because it holds deep history to the city
- Repurpose, Reuse
- Always keep activities going all year round and have collaborative advertising
- People are always looking for new things and normally don't see new places as they drive around daily so promoting new things with the city officials really helps
 - Ex: “The mayor is here” – that builds interest
- Make the people see the worth of investing into their commitments

- Ex: Tax increase is worth its cause...
- Stability of area
 - Pride in community
 - Take care of community
 - Improve the community
 - Support the government and from elected officials
- Everything in reach
 - Cranston has a lot of elements that makes the city
 - Ex: old country clubs
- Close to everything (beaches, airport, etc.)
 - Diversity
 - People hanging out together, coming together and sharing
- Chapel view is good for the city
 - Turning something negative to something positive

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Taxes one of the highest in state
- Not enough opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to come together.
- Limited cultural group events (St. Marys Feast, Greek Festival)
- Rolfe Square has potential for evening/dinner spot -Broken lines of communication within the city-people do not how to get involved
- Newsletter/Cranston Herald limited
- Cranston historical society needed support
- politically divided among the people (Ex: police department issue as in why is it still going on and being brought up again)
- need to do a better job supporting small businesses and people wanting to start businesses
- huge diversity (people of color to become successful)
- the confusion with the roads (less predictable of road systems Ex: Rt. 37)
- Flooding issue (Do not know where drains are, what they are using, why the streets are now flooding?)
- pensions among law enforcement like police and firefighters (Unions and division amongst the two)
- getting people actively engaged at the local (like getting people involved in neighborhood associations is something they want)
- corruption issue as in people know they are wrong but turn their heads the other way (Ex: preserving trees in garden city but were knocked down despite)
- Mayor and police department conflict- need a resolution.
- High taxes but services provided support them
- Infrastructure
- Senior housing
- The condition of the roads and especially in the winter time.
- Lack of community involvement.
- No community center.

- The education system is very poor and the allocation is very poor.
- More funding needs to be available. Cranston is better than Providence but lacking across the US.
- The support we provide to students. To many teachers and support staff do not maximize people's strengths but rather focus on their weaknesses. Focus on special needs.
- People never leave Rhode Island (Isolation). Rhode Islanders need to leave the state to seek work.
- property Taxes
- Jobs
- Municipal pension cuts makes it difficult for workers who have put decades in
- Property valuations still down
- Housing expense
- Tough for outsiders to get to really know what's up
- Can tend to be too insular, tough to meet people unless you get involved
- Roads are in terrible shape
- Some neighborhoods are not well-maintained, roads don't help
- Working poor, impacts worse
- HS graduation rate
- Pockets of poverty; diversity but not well-integrated
- Garbage collection—new system doesn't work, not experienced the same way across the city; crews do not follow rules everywhere
- Pension
- Crime from outside cities that border Cranston
- Politics hindering development because no one talks about the good
- Stop talking about negative things constantly
 - Ex: Studio 38
- Shifting the common conversation among individuals about the activities they attend and not the "crime, tax, etc."
- Cranston is not engaged unless it's happening in their own backyard
- Older generation is not aware of the modern day transformation
- State not fulfilling their responsibility on a time efficient way
 - Ex: If it's going to flood why not clean the street in advance
- What's state own us city
- Economically – needs improvement
- Schools – ranking is low
- Garden city
 - Lack of care and concerns for individuals and community
 - Not communicating or greeting each other at supermarkets
 - Lack of interaction
 - Facebook is making it hard to connect
- Crimes increasing
- Police present – more police patrolling throughout Cranston instead of staying at the corners
- RI has too many cities and town spend money on too many stuff instead of police
- Our taxes need to spend less on government and more on police and other programs

- How can we be more competitive as an economic environment
- Get ranking from other cities and state and we are pretty low
- Economic development and how we spend the money
- People support negative thinking about Rhode Island
- Lack of opportunities to be employed
 - What is the difference between Rhode Island and MA
 - Why do they have more people working there, RI has similar jobs and geographic
 - "Tired of listening emotionally (how bad Rhode Islanders) about Rhode Island
 - Rhode Island is so small, maybe we can make comprehensive choices than MA
- Current electives don't have the current knowledge (background of Cranston)
- Lack of involvement

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Moving forward, we would like to build a bridge for how we can increase our connection within Cranston
- Look into nonprofit-organization support in building groups, Cranston Patch, City councils
 - Doing more things to meet the local people and local officials so as in you can go to the grocery store and would recognize them; get everyone in the neighborhood together
 - "Every home initiative" - Rehabilitate abandoned properties, bring communities together. Re-use resources and property more effectively.
- Have a city wide event so that all the cultures can come together and everyone can learn from each other; from restaurants, to law enforcement, to local businesses, along with people of different race who are now moving into the neighborhoods
 - Ethnicity is a common struggle and want to come together to talk about common issues
 - Pay more attention to certain architectural setting like on Reservoir Avenue where wires may hang etc. and enhance them.
 - Enhance the history within the city and make people more aware of where the city has been and where it is going. Ex: In Providence there are signs on building that promote the history. They want to know what neighborhood they are in inside the city.
- City wide tours to show the city; it brings people together and helps them learn; people want to learn
- School systems are eliminating music, arts, sports programs etc. so making sure that the school systems do not diminish and continue to grow and educate students; it's a funding issue
- Fixing the road system: being trapped during the snow they want to fix the issue or when they are pot holes and sink holes, they replace the roads but again the roads will become destroyed.
- taxes should be lowered again, provide more college classes to high school students
- Expand evening programming right now 2000 members for (85-102) 75 and under don't consider themselves senior citizens.
- Expanded learning opportunities in education and education providers.

- Working with youth and young adults because they have the answers.
- Overlapping circles. Let the youth be exposed to more things such as senior centers.
- Good roads
- Improving economic condition
 - Big companies need to stop outsourcing jobs, increase taxes for companies that outsource
- On the job training for those not able to survive
- Strengthening all our villages to make them mixed use: housing, small businesses, arts
 - Rolfe Square so much opportunity
- Keep the development consistent throughout the area of Cranston
- Capitalize on small area to build the large area
- Fiscal housing
- Expand and get people more engaged
- Find the communications of Cranston
- Communicate the content to communicators within Cranston that can connect with local communities and develop a more collaborated community
- People being willing to either expand their inner ring or put time into developing the middle ring
- More green spaces
 - Less house, more solar more schools
- Don't want more commercial development
- More jobs to keep people in the state
- Need a place where employee's want to live
- Mass transit
 - Location – close to work
 - RIPTA
 - Trains
- Parent's choices – where to raise your families
 - What schools do they want to send their kids to
- Communities with better schools tends to pull more people in their communities
- Branding opportunities for Cranston
 - CVS, G Tech, Fidelity

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Final thoughts -Young people have interest in their community -We need to get involved in our city- Cranston Historical Society as an example -Hearing the different experiences of fellow Cranstonians
 - Strategic plan of having a goal and how to reach the goal; concrete plan; This is how we will get there etc.
- Talking again about fixing the cultural issue: Something to bring the cultures together because at this time the Greek Church does their own thing vs. other churches when they should all come together. Garden city feels like garden city as in the towns do not mix, but they should. Having someone to connect with in other towns so they all know what is going on.

- Utilizing more of the beauty and spaces in Cranston like Roger Williams Park which is gorgeous and should be utilized more by families and groups; family oriented. Adding more picnic tables and not having to require so many permits. Barriers were put in place 30 years ago so going back and reviewing what should still be in place and what should be taken out.
- Some more concentration on the quality of life because it is starting to slip. There are more gang problems so now people are afraid and security is becoming tough and saying no. Saying as in just because some have done wrong does not mean it needs to be taken out on everyone. Security issue in the area during certain times like at Saint Mary's feast this year. Now people do not want to take their small children out when we need to get back to a safe community so people can walk at night and not be afraid. Gave the idea of again knowing the law enforcement in the community and making sure they appear in the community not just to arrest people but to show they are there
- Bringing people together in the community. Making sure that everyone is being heard.
- Assistance for families in need; knowing what and where the resources are like food banks, senior centers, shelters etc. People do not know where the resources are. Not everyone knows where they are or what services they provide unlike Providence where it is advertised. How to apply for benefits?
- What happens next? walk the walk and don't talk the talk
- Be a leader in the community, after school activities. Be a social leader
- Virtual social media neighborhood expansion
- Start the block party, neighborhood "tea"
- Use home-based teaching experience as a conduit for bringing people together
- "Harvest Festival" in Cranston – no longer exists? Funding fell off?
- Work with city councilors to help organize neighborhoods
- Keep this conversation going
 - Get together with the people in our communities
 - Keep the wheels spinning
- Solution
 - What is working and how can we expanding
 - Where are those connectors that can take house pieces and put it together
- Fundraising (soliciting) – having a leader to help make connections to small businesses a big business to raise money to support after school programs (cheerleading, baseball teams, etc.)

CUMBERLAND

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- CYSA (recreation) as easy and nice way to get involved in the community
- youth programming
- ability to network with other children, youth, or parents involved
- great school system
- Local businesses being central parts of the community, also enable entrepreneurs to begin their businesses and grow (Dave's Marketplace, Coffee Connection, etc.)
- Idea: Cumberland's youth programming enables children and young adults to get involved, as well as allows parents to network with one another and make connections within the community.
- Fire district consolidation is an idea that more towns should adopt.
- Rich history – oldest writings, key to industrial revolution
- Community development
- Cumberland center of focus is education now
- Has strength in people living here for generations
- CYSA + youth programs
- School system
 - With affordable housing
- Commodities with neighbors and those we meet via youth sports
- Open spaces
 - Diamond Hill
 - Bike Path
 - Blackstone River
- Small business/entrepreneurs
- Historic
- Diversity

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- defining school lines
- North vs. South Cumberland
- preserving history (Broad Street Corridor)/embracing history of town
- no "center of town" or "Main Street"
- managing development (possibly over developing land), redeveloping land and buildings (old mills) instead of developing untouched land
- Cost of housing. Equality of opportunity for kids from poor areas of town and more well-off areas.
- Preserve the Broad Street corridor which is very historic
- Manage the development and growth of housing

- Develop historic mills
- Talk, discuss, and teach about the historical motive of the tower

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- preserving the great things that the town has
- putting more into current strengths (education and school system, housing)
- Entertainment and creative arts, cultural events, more events to celebrate the people of Cumberland and what they do and embrace all ages/cultures/etc.
- taking what's already there (programs, buildings, etc.) and improving/redeveloping as opposed to new developments
- more walkable, commercial areas for residents to spend time (coffee places, book stores, pizza places, etc. in more commercial area)
- Ann and Hope Mill should be redeveloped into housing, affordable housing for millennials. Would be great to see a farmers market on the property.
- Envision preserving "what we have"
- Improve/continue "Arts & Culture"
- Broad Street fair
- Develop historic treasures (houses, factories, etc.) as opposed to simply building new homes
- More "walkable" commercial areas that will ignite interaction
- Farmers markets

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- getting other people from town excited about the ideas and possibilities;
- create a spark of interest; bumping into the right person to get the ball rolling
- Getting momentum to encourage others
- Can develop "circles of friends" once we leave
- Get people together with great ideas and then how do you execute

EAST GREENWICH

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Good place to raise a family
- Schools
- Restaurants
- Community activities (Main Street Stroll, Farmers Markets)
- Proximity to highways / rail service
- Town services
- Town Center (Academy Field, Main Street). This is an area that was redeveloped over the last twenty five years
- Main Street is our core. We have a downtown that life revolves around. The Odeum and other features create a sense of community. We have a sense of people belonging - tied to Main St.
- A small town feel. It feels like you're going back in town. People aren't pretentious. People are included regardless of income level.
- It's close to Warwick and North Kingstown. Goddard Park - Ives Rd. It's a beautiful place to have kids and it's a good place to be. It's close to waterfront scenes.
- It's a good place to be. The people make it a good place to be. People look out for each other. It's inclusive - we love each other.
- Medical community
- easy access Boatability - easy to access by boat
- NETech and the upcoming dormitories could impact us positively. They can be a large service provider to the community. They are closing the skills gap which impacts us outside of EG as well
- East Greenwich has a town government that maintains its Main Street

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Lack of a grocery store downtown
- Nothing for working women from Parks & Recreation department
- Redundancy of services across communities
- Lack of diversity (ethnic and socio-economic)
- Protectevism of the status quo
- Improvements in the next 5 years
- Further development of the downtown including getting the Odeum Theater where it should be
- More efficient government
- More opportunities to bring the community together
- Keep up the standard of living.
- Make sure kids stay out of trouble, safe, and not using drugs.
- Lack of diversity

- Too much emphasis on the kids. We do too much for the kids and not enough for everyone else.
- The town used to pick up the leaves
- Potholes.
- high cost of infrastructure
- ensure the waterfront is maintained good programs for kids at risk moving main street forward (retail) utilization of industrial/commercial space segregation between the hill and the harbor

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Create forums for the sharing of best practices across communities
- Look for opportunities to bring the community together to facilitate the development of the middle ring
- Leverage New England Tech to create more opportunities to bring the community together
- Develop programs to celebrate cultural events (i.e. Chinese New Year's)
- It's a detriment that people think of leaving when their kids aren't in school anymore.
- Condos - options for people without kids...nearing retirement.
- Having a walking community.
- Making sure all of our assets (resources, activities, etc...) accessible for all people...truly inclusive
- A bike path from Elizabeth Spring/Scalloptown (bridge)
- Utilize school space Access/promote Scalloptown Park & Goddard Park coherent utilization of the cove/waterfront mixed usage of main street utilize old Bostich building and other industrial areas

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Scalloptown Bridge
- Add programs for seniors

EAST PROVIDENCE

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Entrenched sense of community in EP
- Lifelong RI's -> welcoming to accepting new people,
 - Might be from immigrant culture of accepting
- Strength is in the continuous improvement
 - Resident driven, voting involvement -> people voice is heard
- Location is strength
 - Outskirts of the city, water, bike path
- Seekonk
 - 4 miles from Providence
 - Strength -> broken up smaller communities
 - Build more neighborhood community feel in smaller knit circles
- Neighborhoods always have been important parts of EP
- Started out economically successful
 - Falling behind but coming back into the picture
- EP as the last old school community in RI
- Low on crime
 - Crime incidents rarely heard on the news in East Providence
- Sense of community
 - Everybody knows everybody
 - All are connected
 - Great neighbors – right there for you
 - Seen in older community that is well established
 - Everyone looks after each other/people stay
- Geographic location
 - Close to Providence
 - On the water: can be capitalized
 - Mobile & Exon were able to purchase land
- Something that has worked
 - Police presence: present not overbearing
 - Police have improved their practice
 - Have a good “middle ring”
 - Always know someone

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- lack of diversity (people of color), discouraging
- Money
 - Providence is a small city, always growing but is that the correct allocation of the money?
 - Funding issues

- Stability
- Debt concerns
 - IS THE STATE DOING THINGS the smartest way to manage their debt
- How are tax dollars being spent?
 - Managing special interest groups
 - Keeping the emotions out of the decisions
- Rising taxes driving people out of the area
- Schools
 - People don't move to EP for the schools
 - Schools don't have high marks (urban legend?)
 - Not a commitment to leaders
 - Student performance is low
- Divide between old time Riverside residents (lower income) and new residents (higher income)
 - Conflicting social groups
 - Riverside Square vs Riverside Renaissance movement
 - Divide among city among social classes
 - Connected to real estate
 - Cheaper homes being bought
- Would people move to East Providence for Bay View
 - Majority from outside of East Providence
 - Struggling with enrollment
 - Expensive
- Communities will only be stable until the living population is alive
 - Need people to move here and stay here
 - Parental engagement issue
 - Encourage non-native speakers to go to classes for language to engage with teachers
 - Middle class – working parents
 - Parents don't know how to help children with their school work
 - Give invitations
 - Talking about what they do like
 - Give tools to help parent's (offer classes)

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Better education for the cities -> public (also nationwide same issue)
- Diversity, especially in educational services and growth
- Stronger economy
 - Closed schools, fire stations that used to bind communities
 - As a result community suffers
- Need for community growth
 - More revenue coming in
- There are so many infrastructure needs that need to be updates
- Shopping centers being built that are useless now that people go elsewhere to shop
- More community interaction/events/communications

- Lack of cohesiveness
- Lower grades
 - No huge classes
 - Get smaller scales
- So many empty store fronts, buildings
 - Companies holding out are hurting the community
- Focus of education
 - Smaller classes
 - Children need to learn in a environ to shire
 - Needs to include parents
 - Needs to be diverse
 - Just increased learning
- Economic
- Need to revitalize areas/business front property
- Community feels are created with some of these little ships
 - Community based businesses
- Remain the same because it is historic
 - A lot of mills gone
 - Renovation to keep historic places
- People move to East Providence to stay
 - Businesses need to thrive more
- Neighborhood to stay the same
 - We all watch out for each other
- Capitalize on the water front location
 - Brings life
 - Cleanup the beach
 - Cherish and respect what we have
- Government
 - East Providence is construction friendly to improve
 - Concerned about traffic patterns
 - Awareness of destinations

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Stronger overall state
 - The state seems to be struggling
- More power to the families
 - Educational. And community
 - Schools are suffering because lack of respect being taught from home environments
- Turn these issues into a whole state issue
 - Not town vs. town issues
- Strong communities..... but!
 - But government needs to collaborate, not be selfish
- State needs an issue to come together

- Towns are to splintered
- People are getting to busy for neighborly connections
 - Technology taking away from social structures
- So much focus on a packed life schedule, need a cultural shift
- Conversations between people of different interests and backgrounds
- More people aware of issues
 - Hun House: historical restoration from grants
- Find alliances?
- New information known to others
- Originally grouped with Central Falls and Pawtucket
 - Accepting of individuals
 - Learned that East Providence wanted to have an art festival
 - Pawtucket is known for arts
 - Looked to make a connection
 - Needed to be publicized better
- Connections
 - Contacting city officials
 - Facebook group
 - People gripe on the page instead of to the city counsel

FOSTER

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Quality of people
- Education system
- “Pathways” – seeing plans for future

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Zoning for business
 - Fighting with existing citizens on change
- It would bring more taxes – anchor that people would go to

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Artisan open studios
- Like to see a town center with a library, police, retail, food, and beverages

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- More to participate from the town – get involved

GLOCESTER

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Very strong school system

JOHNSTON

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- It's a nice place to live because of the location.
- It's easy to commute to providence.
- Economically there is a lot of room for growth.
- The town government has been trying to bring in a lot more business and there is a lot of opportunity for that.
- It's a nice small community.
- Different organizations exist that really want to make a positive difference.
- A lot of opportunity to get involved in the town.
- One of few towns left that still has a homecoming parade with floats.

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Financial challenges that the town has.
- Taxes are being charged but it is still hard to make ends meet.
- Landfill and resource recovery are in our town so you would think there might be a relief on taxes.
- The landfill is one of the biggest challenges. Living with the smell.
- We have to work a lot more as millennials.

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- A gas line installed all along ... avenue.

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Lower taxes.
- For people to be more opened minded and for people to be progressing. They can keep true to their values but can also advance who they are.

LINCOLN

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Convenient location, near Rt. 146. Easy to get to Providence. Good school system. Revenue from Twin River helps keep taxes low. Not too crowded.
- Lincoln is not overbuilt like Cumberland. More open space. Lincoln Woods is a great asset. Good quality of life.
- Neighbors and neighborhood looks out for each other (before)
- Very good school system (2001, still is)
- Lincoln woods – fishing, horseback riding
- Proximate to job opportunities, big cities
- Beautiful area, great place to raise kids in natural environment
- Small town feel
- Things to do in Lincoln (Twin River, enterprises)
- Great balance between rural and urban
- Spacious housing (more than Providence)
- Smoothly run now; easy process to build new businesses

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- If Twin River suffers then taxes will go up. Fire taxes are very high.
- What Twin River will become – could be cash cow?
 - Will it become known for that as it expands?
 - Should not become another Foxwoods community
- Houses are too old – need to give tax incentives for people to renovate and become more green/environmental friendly
- Less sense of community – Lincoln needs to modernize
- School system not challenging enough
 - Only feedback is “checkbox that says satisfactory”
- Very private, not necessarily welcoming
- Twin River is nice but doesn’t fit
- Have to rent a long time before moving into Lincoln – no middle class
- No town center – very fragmented

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Use the Internet to get ideas from more people and share ideas and community visioning. A direct process whereby people could vote for exactly what they want.
- Should regionalize education and combine purchasing power among Northern RI communities.
- Consolidate fire districts.

- Don't feel like change is coming in 3 – 5 years
- Schools must change
- Front street should have more involvement
- Should have community center

NARRAGANSETT

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Boiling it to 2 things. I wake up thinking I died and went to heaven... Narragansett and S. C. - what you see is what you get.
- Bar in Narragansett, sit next to a millionaire or someone who's a fisherman and speak to either one, equally. Contrasting that with other seaside communities who run roughshod over everybody.
- Our state is treasure of vehicles. Easy to get depressed about being depressed but this place has so many natural wonderful resources.
- Watershed and ocean. Every morning is it is stunning and different from the day before. Vistas like that are incredible.
- Demographics. Older people who are smart, engaged, able to get around. They get involved, they volunteer, and they're interested. The challenge is to recruit the next wave.
- People who live there. Many have moved to that area because of its beauty. Then become interested in the history. Looking to find out more information. They science in the ocean, the history... all about Narragansett. They are an involved audience. Hoping to get them to take the next step and take action.
- Organizations, the communities, the civic organizations in Narragansett.
- University is strength.
- It's in important to me having lived in West Chester County... I love the lack of development. It's a bit controversial but I love it. Do not bring in "Target", for example.
- Festivals
- athletic activities - runs and bikes
- Outdoor events.
- Police & Firemen's ball at the Dunes Club. I think it would be great if every community did that. Everyone is invited. Teens, college, snowbirds. If you attend Town Council meetings - you can know all the firefighters and police.
- So many pluses from - URI - College students, when they get involved, are really great.
- Director of Park & Rec - began the Annual Gansett Day Weekend - 50 events in September. Educational talks in various locations through Narragansett regarding the different locations and services (i.e.: Block Island Ferry)
- Lectures at South Ferry Church.
- Senior Center offers 1-day bus rides to NYC.

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Finding out what is going on. Who is marketing the town?
- We don't have a town center - that is a bit of an issue.
- Communications Challenge. How information is disseminated. Publicity of events.
- 4 or 5 Town Manager over the past 9 years or so. With each new Manager there is a learning curve that takes a while to get them up to speed with regard to issues.

- Town lacks a vision for what it could be. The vision should come from citizens. Feels "willy nilly"
- Beaches get "tagged" (graffiti). Ruining the beauty and it is our greatest resources.
- They are also dangerous. Every year someone drowns.
- Vision in the community about this town's beauty we wouldn't have the tagging behavior. Community attention to garbage and the like, this would be a way to avoid some the bad behavior.
- Lavatory facilities. Hygiene issues on the beaches.
- Multiple jurisdictions.
- No little-town feeling in Narragansett, no centralized town spaces

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Plan to upgrade beach area with regard to parking, facilities, ramps...
- Make the communities more inclusive.
- Village to help older people age in place.
- Create a welcoming environment for students as we do for the tourists.
- Flow through the area so cycles cars walkers everyone can share the area and get around and make things more accessible for people.
- A more formal commitment between the university and the town management.
- Organization that brings the community together.
- Creating a "Local Moth" on RI NPR. Or run it locally.
- Better PR for the community.

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Connections... introductions to our own community.
- Creating the "middle rings" in the community.
- Creating better Leadership for changes.
- Creating better publicity for the events going on in Narragansett.

NORTH KINGSTOWN

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- likes the human interaction (when you go to a store/walk); eye contact
- driving in neighborhood teenagers would wave to you....neighborly feeling
- high school is a positive experience though children and building community; always something going on; like a town center
- Pride: views southern RI as a separate state--- pride to be from southern RI; shows people are willing to put in effort
- schools draw in community
- loves the open space: DEM/nature conservancy/land trust/great places for hiking/farms
- libraries: each are huge draws
- Slocum: it's like you're in "Kansas"; green fields
- trains: "wonderful sound that reminds you that you're connected to something bigger"
- can see the sky and stars
- Quonset is one of our states greatest assets
- transportation assets: Wickford junction
- Narragansett Bay: boating/fishing
- Historical assets: Wickford villages
- Human assets: writers/intellectuals/politicians/Olympic swimmer
- Plenty of opportunity
- Neighborly/humble people
- Arts
- you can be involved with children in the community
- Not too many red lights
- One of the few communities that still have major parades
- monthly magazine and the newspaper
- concerts in the summer in Wickford
- People: Al Southwick (recreational king), people on the boards and commissions
- Wickford harbor allows us to access lively areas, beach, well-protected – need to use harbor access as more of a strength
- Quonset Point – economic influence, development, highway structure brings residents in undeveloped beaches (Warwick to Isla Allen's Harbor), diversity in neighborhoods/restaurant
- Historic value of places – Wickford/Pleasant Street
- Sense of community drives to town
 - i.e. Wickford Village
- Being close to water – Quonset, Wickford Beach

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- getting the town government and school to work together
- getting the town council to work together
- Main street: now it's the place to be but the plumbing infrastructure is bad
- Route 1: we need to make it more beautiful (maybe grow more trees)
- information distribution
- Lack of democratic process/transparency: we don't follow a fair process to get things done. Don't follow the proper procedures. Politics gets in the way. Too many conversations behind closed doors.
- The role of service: lets it go to their heads.
- Town hall: dirty, and people are rude. The mindset "I'm here to serve you, not my own personal nature"
- Unions
- Wickford (Ryan's market still not filled, Wilson's) anchor businesses will be no longer, influence of megastores
- 3-way staple/corner in Wickford for restaurants
- 2/3 new vacancies in Wickford, existing stores relevant to tourist populations, what is main street? Would open another shop in a better economy
- Wickford junction – train stations is closed
- NK is just a middle point to get elsewhere
- Economic collapse of Wickford Village
- Political parties are in the way for NK

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- make some of our open spaces a place for active engagement, like a think tank; with an email list of people who attended
- students should be on the boards
- welcome center for tourists downtown that has a big sign that simply says "Yes"; a place where people can get information about the town/what events are going on/do we need another nail salon?
- we need a database-- open up a non-profit "North Kingstown Community Commonwealth"; get information out to the town; get student interns to help out; using this you can also delegate different projects
- people on the council/boards should do the StrengthFinder
- Wickford close to being its maximum emptiness, need to redefine main street for Modern America
- Vision for Wickford that's more proactive
- Our town of North Kingstown – strategic, long-term plan for the town
- WaterFire in Wickford
- Wickford block parties, to include new people on your street with no kids, neighbors you don't talk to

- More restaurants to keep business in NK; to bump business to NK – more upscale and midscale restaurants
- Connectivity to the town is only through kids in school system. Clueless about Wickford plans
- Feel more like a community; be more of a community
 - Wickford is Wickford, Saunderstown is Saunderstown – defend sense of NK
- What is east Greenwich doing that NK can learn from?
 - What is the vision for Wickford?

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Improve active engagement
- Transparency
- Getting the council and the schools to work together: COMMUNICATION!
- They have the budget of Providence
- Meet again with the other tables (and other concerned citizens)
- Actually start working on the "think tank"
- Putting flyers up in Wickford about a meet-up/hang out
- Say to friends & neighbors "Shop more in Wickford!"
- Draw people to open markets – coffee shops in Providence act as these hubs (Shayna's in Wickford)
- Building community even if it's around just Wickford

NORTH PROVIDENCE

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Strong sense of community, at a neighborhood level.
- An investment into the neighborhood.
- Affordability
- Friendly, helpful community.
- Proximity to Providence, city area.
- Access to highways, easy commuting.
- Changing demographics
- The people are key to building the community
- Sense of community
- Vibrant arts
- Successful small businesses
- Friendly, close knit, small/compact
- Neighborly
- Diversity coming together in small community
- Multigenerational connections
- Different cultures interacting

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- No bike lanes, no sidewalks
- No destination—no center of town. i.e. cafés, gathering places to relax and meet people
- High Taxes
- Caters to an older population.
- Changing demographics
- An aging population has trouble with the changing demographics.
- Definition of community differences of opinion
- Getting people involved
- Economic challenges/hardships
- Community defined by professional interests
- Negative attitudes
- Closemindedness
- Apathetic
- Lack of assimilation

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Centralized locations to meet. Example, Restaurants, coffee shops - a subset of Providence.
- Bike paths (safe)
- Tax incentives for new businesses.
- Strengthen the educational system.
- Community Facebook page
- Starting small – one person's contributions, one at a time
- Helping each other grow
- Bring more culture to the state
- Bringing a focus on art
- Redevelopment and repopulation
- Focus on building the economy

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Different communities interacting
- Inclusion of everyone, not just a few people in the community
- Improving quality of life

PAWTUCKET

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- There is “community” in Pawtucket: It still feels like a community
- It is close to everything
 - Potential to be interconnected with other cities
- Business, arts, education, and other communities have potential
- Assets
 - Opened spaces: Slater Mill, Slater Park, McCoy Stadium, etc.
 - Beautiful Architecture, buildings
 - Arts High School
- Safety; more safe compared with other places in cities
- Assets underused: Downtown Pawtucket
- A lot of business, international businesses headquartered in Pawtucket
- Slater Parks
- Slater Mill
- Pawtucket Arts Festival
- Blackstone Heritage Corridor Parks
- Great people
- Community of people
- First generation of immigrants
- Cultural influences
- Diversity
- Movies in the parks
- Chinese dragon boat races
- Respect for people who rebuild the old mills
- Great value in the rebuild buildings, many young professionals living there
- Taxes are low and it’s a good investment opportunity

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Young people have to feel that Pawtucket is our “home”
- Get the youth be more involved
- Lack of commination amongst “light-minded” people
 - Help connect the people that are active and want to make a difference, especially with social media.
 - Not to be an observer but more active
- Money is needed in order to execute ideas
- Recycling the plastic and making people understand why that matters
- Getting the schools involved: for example, have field trips that allow children to learn more about their city

- How do we work with the school department?
- What can be at the Pawtucket Red Sox stadium?
 - Soccer stadium
 - Semi-pro
- Need a place for kids
- Neighborhoods don't have as many kids playing outside
- Need mentoring program after school to help kids with homework because parents aren't able to help them
- Parent's working so hard the parents don't get involved in community activities
 - There is a major language barrier
- Tight budget

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Spreading our message to expose it to other people
- Monthly speakers that talk about our city: for example, how was the fashion back then, the buildings, etc.?
- Creative outreach
- Creating a database, agencies, etc.
- Have Pawtucket act like a "training center" for college students and businesses.
- Soccer stadium for Paw Sox stadium commercial
- See more gardens
 - More education about gardens and food
- Maybe a huge school police cadet academy
- Work with police for sports
- Community centers
 - So many things can be done there
- A new train station because there are many people that don't have transportation to jobs
 - Connect to Boston for new young professionals
- Mall and retail areas that are owned by people who can make the necessary improvements
 - Realistic expectations
- Have a contact person in the city

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Taking this information and utilizing it
- Create a meet-up group
- Set up a follow up community meeting and talk about what can benefit their local community

PROVIDENCE

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Walkability
 - to work
- Aesthetic
 - Change in cleanliness and aesthetic changes/improvements
 - Better look and feel
- Residents are experts in their field
 - People here to follow their passion
 - People are in jobs they want- not just ones they fell into
- Different ways to be entrepreneurs besides the traditional store
 - So many female entrepreneurs
 - The “lady project” PVDlady project
- Networking- easier because so many different people are consistently close
 - “only 1 Starbucks downtown”
 - Quick and easy to create a brand
- So many arts- to the point we could be jaded
- Strengths of individual areas
 - Entrepreneurial on the **west side**
 - Small local spaces
 - Drives more small businesses
 - Tater tots at ogies
 - Unique restaurants/boutiques
 - Renaissance but not a renaissance- repurposing in new ways
 - WBNA facilitates (middle ring) neighbor interactions with fun, inclusive, annual events like the neighborhood Yard Sale, Safe trick or treating maps, neighborhood spring cleanup, etc.
 - WestSide created indoor play space for kids
 - West Side -- WBNA. An advocate for community, starting new projects
 - WBNA, I agree. Facilitating sense of community.
 - West Side Play Space - shared, indoor winter play space.
 - Neighborhood feel of **the east side**
 - Quit walks yet still close to shopping/entertainment
 - Providence flea is picking up the city
 - Safe to walk at night
 - Artistic Community that’s deeply cultural - mostly from the Azores. This instills a huge sense of community. There’s more connection between neighbors. Food is usually a huge point of connection.
 - Concentration of wealth, intellectual capacity, youth, energy - assets that could be deployed for working on major projects that could have statewide impact.

- Diversity in my neighborhood
- Gathering places such as farmer's markets that serve as "middle ring" venues
- Intentional church-based communities, such as St Mary's on Broadway
- A safe-feeling neighborhood is conducive to meeting neighbors
- Every 6 weeks, neighbors gather on Sunday afternoon for soup parties, which creates community and helps you to understand your neighbors, and creates a feeling of safety
- Small, local stores and coffee shops create community
- Very active politically, advocacy, socially community
- CBOs that provide a lot of information health, utilities, other assistance
- Friendly, outgoing people - Not insulated like many other places (e.g. cul-de-sacs, developments)
- neighbors interact
- welcoming to newcomers -say hello when passing on street -engage with each other on street and in shops
- Peaceful, sense of security, feels safe ("I don't lock my door")
- Camaraderie between neighbors - mutual respect between neighbors
- focus on youth as the future of the community
- Watch each other's kids, take turns meeting kids at bus stop
- desire to bridge communities (e.g. South Side, East Side)
- community builders like Kobi Dennis
- places like Billy Taylor House
- elders in community mentoring, sharing experiences, and imparting knowledge to youth - providing historical perspectives kids don't get in classrooms (e.g. slavery, black history of RI)
- Viewing education as a social justice issue * Getting factual local history into the classrooms, e.g. RI black history
- Strong, engaged neighbors can support kids living in difficult home situations by providing models of behavior and value systems (e.g. not littering)
- Cultural diversity, food, people
- Ease of communicating with everyone
- Common Desire to make city better
- Ease of connecting to diverse people and experiences
- Ability to nurture middle-ring relationships based on geographic proximity
- Small size
- Ease of transportation
- access to diverse perspectives
- Intimacy
- Ability to collaborate on issues
- diversity
- Open engagements with community.
- People are working on smaller issues. small programs.
- Compassion
- sense of interconnections
- Access to great resources.
- colleges are utilized

- spiritual connection
- Great history.
- Providence is the center of the state.
- Small size is great advantage for RI.
- The passion to make lives better. The potential for change, and the desire to make a difference.
- Tolerance for the nontraditional worker
- Special needs future stability in terms of what happens when their caretaker is no longer around
- Spending behaviors- urging consumers to support the organizations that employ the "nontraditional" worker
- Diversity & engagement.
- Truly diverse and engaged workplaces. Great example: Dorcas International
- Blackstone Valley Tourism Council -- is a connector. A diverse city with no history of inclusiveness to that diversity. BVTC is the link that has broad outreach. Invite people to participate.
- Wealth of talent, resilience of youth, a plethora of opportunity.
- Creativity, opportunity to broker connections, opportunity to pursue and develop ideas and fill a niche locally
- e/ opportunities
- Interface with various people through different situations.
- Division of the East Side
- History
- Diversity
- Architecture
- Accessibility
- Community organizations, well networked with each other
- 2 degrees of separation
- Great Main streets
- 20 minute neighborhood
- Restaurants
- Individuals working on things for the community
- Beautiful small sized city, livable
- Exciting urban living - museums, societies
- Intelligence of the community – smart intellectual thought leaders – constantly striving to do something better, innovate.
- Commitment to involvement – many societies, nonprofits – many people involve who lend intelligence to causes they are helping
- Leveraging both involvement and intelligence of people – sharing among the different groups in different cities. – How did you address this problem, etc.? – insightful questions and answers
- Organizing a neighborhood watch to reduce crime
- Willingness to help each other
- Small enough community
- Friendly neighborhood, welcoming

- Last winter – helped an elderly neighbor shovel the snow
- Program that ensures elderly people are well taken care of – simple thing that everyone can contribute to
- Ethnic diversity – explosion of groups over the past 30 years
- Part of one community but communities celebrate their differences – richness of culture
- Strength: universities – to leverage on these universities, use their libraries – they are our future – business opportunity
- Free library – governor street – access to books
- WaterFire = asset to city; RISD artists are endorsed to transform public spaces
- Strength = scale; everything is in walking distance/accessible
- Neighborhood parties (East Side) – familiarity with neighbors
- Fox point + Rochambeau – infusion of old and new (libraries + local shops)
- Word of mouth – on going activity – interconnectedness
- High density of people from different backgrounds – cross pollination
 - Ex: Stadium conflict – people from very different backgrounds coming
- Diversity of universities
- Social entrepreneurship – young millennials (18-27) wanting to make change
- Progress in making schools (colleges) connected to the community
- Transferable aspects
 - Having a free library, coffee shop etc. in many areas
 - Hudson Street gallery “where strangers become neighbors”
 - Making schools more accessible to students (in walking distance)
 - Good for business, relationships
 - Ex: White electric across from Classical high school
 - Bars, delis, etc. within walking distance of suburban cities
 - Buy a multiple story building for living and business
- Strong drive to not give up
- Learning English – fete to itself – goal for yourself to learn
- Develop ability to make other goals and don’t take for granted
- Cultural sensitivity
- Small business person/refugees/immigrants are risk takers
- Great vibe, connectivity
- Proximity of neighborhoods, different type of neighborhoods
- Walkable community
- Fabric and strength of the city
- Open engagement
 - Elorza’s new administration has open community meetings
 - Platform for being heard
- Tons of small organizations working on important issues
 - Organizations capacity allows to get a lot of stuff done in amount of time
- Passion about being in Providence
- Neighborhood associations = middle ring
 - Grassroots movement
- Interconnectedness and accessibility

- Perhaps limited resources but there is a lot access to those resources
- Connectivity with colleges and how college graduates create so much for the community
 - i.e.: New restaurants etc....
- History
 - Generations of connectedness
 - Almost a spiritual connection
 - Both people and places
 - Ex: "I used to go to school here" etc.
- Our size lends itself to doing so much
- Providence has significantly less problems than Baltimore
 - Things can get fixed here
- Providence is expanding – new neighborhoods are opening up
- Higher education is one of our strengths
- Historical buildings
- Brown University's apology for slavery
 - Leader in discussion
 - Face discussions
 - Leverage young
 - Diversity in Providence
 - New generation
 - Hungry young people who need change
- Small enough to learn problem first opportunity

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Everyone is too busy with their lives and juggling work and family
- Attitude to garbage, not caring about littering affects the neighborhood aesthetics (we need an anti-littering campaign)
- Noise level coming from passing cars
- Communication about community activities
- People are afraid: trusting others, personal safety (e.g., road rage, shootings), media coverage makes things divisive
- Rising real estate taxes + lowered property values
- Lack of common courtesy from people you come in contact with, lack of friendliness
- Retention of young families, leave for better education elsewhere
- Walkable neighborhood schools. Kids have less stewardship of neighborhood, etc.
- Apathy, non-engagement, feeling of impotence with regards to politics, policies, etc.
- Lack of engagement (schools, politics, community issues) especially people without kids
- School curriculum problems
- Official State name is offensive/insulting to many people - demoralizing, feeling that it insinuates oppression, bad connotation
- Busy people's capacity to help

- Retaining fabric of neighborhoods (demographics) while having accessible politicians is strength of our small city, a weakness is that they are beholden to old friends, connections, and associates. "Old boys' network" and cronyism, favors owed, etc.
- Fear of change and trying something new; waiting for results without action Stigmatism of zipcodes; need to recognize and give equity to diversity Lack interest in others' issues;
- tourism marketing focused on some neighborhood rather than all
- Collaborate with industries to promote social justice and equity
- Lack of opportunities for undervalued workers, particularly immigrants, lack of living wage and respectable careers Inability to relinquish power in individual areas
- More duplication and less collaboration
- Lack of viable solutions for racial, ethnic, economic inequality
- Lack of celebration of diversity of the city Feeling of mediocrity, underperforming
- Art Community: Art work doesn't showcase local art. Not a lot gets done.
- South End: Not enough diversity and exchange of ideas
- Cynicism.
- Government is not efficient.
- Inequality in educations.
- Mafia mentality, you have to know a guy to get things done.
- No access for the immigrant populations.
- People lost hope in Providence. A lot of fatalism in the state.
- People afraid of other people.
- Poverty in children
- Gaps in education, healthcare, economic opportunity
- More programs needed for youth during out of school time= camps, volunteer programs, counseling, etc.
- More programs needed to educate & -- Unemployment.
- Educational system, inequity. Particularly challenging for immigrants, language barrier.
- Meeting needs of immigrants
- Restructuring RI for equity. For example, today... All speakers are white men.
- Pessimism about Rhode Island's current situation. Failure to see and focus on and build on state's strengths.
- Failure to recognize the role of race in Rhode Island. Failure to have a big conversation about race.
- Providence is not business-friendly
- Size of the state and it is shrinking.
- Investing in children as assets so they can overcome obstacles to achievement
- Education, Education, Education specialize our workforce in areas like computer skills, leadership, etc.
- Race class segregation
- Access to individuals
- Private organizations prevent communication and interaction with your neighbors.
- Isolationism
- People-to-people/ face-to-face time
- School systems

- Partnership with government
- Lack of involvement/ interaction
- Weakness of our local government
- Property Taxes
- Diversity
- Crime
- Homelessness -West end
- Poverty-west end
- Crime
- Negativity
- Perception
- Quality of roads/snow/infrastructure
 - Driver, pedestrian, and biker
- Education
 - Systemic
 - Low expectations from preschool to college (CCRI)
 - Students graduating lacking fundamental skills
 - Basic writing (reading and math) skills don't exist
- Parking ☹️
- Racial profiling in his neighborhood – person of color harassed on the street by police
- Make it a more inclusive society
- Give help beyond your own community
- Look it as one big city, not different fragmented segments
- More cultural inclusiveness, churches can do better in that respect
- Education can also be more inclusive – currently segmented
- 195 land development
- huge opportunity for Providence to expand as an economic, residential, tourism, neighborhood hub – more parks, restaurants, housing – doing the same thing as what Brown has done for the “Jewel” district
- A lot of opportunity but little action
- Ethnic and racial tensions – different neighborhoods feel segmented
- Racial profiling
- Very different compared to Atlanta, which was a lot more racially diverse, integrated.
- Ethnic tensions, bifurcated neighborhoods, divided
- Answer is to have organizations
- Come together and work on an issue – starting a conversation on what problems we have – one problem is that mayor is not performing, executing
- Create a unified city
- to leverage universities
- how to make universities the focal point of success – business success
- solve firefighters problems without getting hostile
- Providence College not connected to community in the same way as Brown, RISD, JWU
 - Clashing between neighborhood and PC students
- Housing – zombie foreclosures – houses not on market that are vandalized

- Housing costs, renting costs – causing people living in the outskirts
 - People invest in where they want to live as opposed to what they actually do
- East side: resistance to change, especially zoning changes. Need more experimentation
 - Engaging the neighborhood association = difficult
- Need for better coordination between gas, water, electricity, etc. when initiating projects
- State's smallness – fewer contractors to choose from
- Hard for new businesses to break in
 - Code for America – difficulty with permits
- Education – but is an endemic issue in all of America
 - Corruption due to lack of common ground
- Violence/home breaking (especially on East Side) affecting quality of life – especially for elderly – ties to lack of community interconnectedness
- Employment opportunities – scarcity
- A lot of duplication of efforts within nonprofits especially a lot of resources that go to waste especially given so many hospitals, colleges, etc.
- The incarceration system, people who benefit from such a system
- Harder for immigrants from years ago – compare to those now
- Refugees just came from Liberia – no education/basic English
- Fear + lack of confidence
- Refugee/immigrants are very dehumanized
- Forgetting that immigrants come with much skills but not recognized because lacking degree
- Brining immigrants support in achieving the so called American Dreams
- Huge lack of resources to provide services and support to programs that supports immigrant population
- Trained workforce as a whole
- Cultural sensitivity training
- Harken back to jobs for everyone
- Lack of empathy
- People don't have the cultural intelligence
- A lot of companies not investing in their employees
- Focus on public education
- Not be afraid to change
- Don't let technology interfere with human connectivity
- Resistance to change sometimes outweighs positive change
- Rhode Islanders are very cynical about things getting done here
- RI small state...inferiority complex
- We're too close, distance wise
- Getting into underserved communities
 - One of the highest incarceration rates
- Can't grow unless you bring everyone along
- Create more efficiency in government
- People in government are about helping themselves/friends
- Mafia mentality
 - Ex: "He's a crook, but he's our crook"

- Transportation/ Access to Resources
- Immigration – a burden the community takes on
 - ESL issues; non-English speaking population
 - St. Mary's
 - Korean pope
 - Spanish speaking pope
- Loss of hope – fatalism
- Brain drain
 - Small business environment
 - NOI friendly
- Public Education
 - Education so unstable; huge achievement gap
- Haves/Have Nots – inequality
- SBO obstacles
- State and stagnate state agencies/entrenched in culture of “no”
- State needs innovation, asks/wants innovation, but those with the granting authority power won't allow for it
- Providence strong art scene, but not as much of a music scene
- Segregated cities
- Need to start discussions
- Young discouraged that system won't change
- Entrenched system
- Lack of access to connections impacts the following:
 - Home
 - Health
 - Wellness
 - Justice
- Lack of knowledge on all fronts

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Neighborhood organization like Summit, Blackstone, and College Hill
- More activities for kids (that parents bring them to)
- More gatherings, block parties, especially in the winter months
- Bringing community groups together to work on a project (e.g., clean up the environment, gardening)
- Intercultural, diverse, intergenerational activities
- More community associations
- Get large stores such as Walgreen's and Starbucks to have a community notice board, and participate or organize activities
- Have a community org. that updates community bulletin boards (the boards could be in key gathering spaces)
- Real estate management people could do more with transient populations, serve as a conduit for people to get info about community

- Working collectively to raise a community (is like raising a child)
- Retaining the demographic and socioeconomic fabric of the neighborhood (diversity)
- More cross-community engagement More collaborative opportunities to share resources, build on ideas
- Common accessible area that break neighborhood barriers
- More data-driven decisions
- Develop human capital; take advantage of knowledge of citizens
- Tourism that focuses on each neighborhood; inclusive marketing
- Expanded LRI convening
- Focus of strengths
- More development in public transportation, accessibility
- More development in education
- Agreed requirement that businesses, government, education collaborating to help qualify students to participate in workforce
- Continue & strengthen the sense of connection/integration, community, open mindedness
- Changing school funding/budgets- re allocation of funds with a focus on areas that need the resources the most
- Rhode Island campaign about "volunteering" and involvement- a community push to come together
- More diversity within the "civic engagement" sector, larger range of opportunity between formal & informal engagement opportunities
- More ON THE REGULAR town festivals/block parties/cooking competitions/engagement opportunities/networking events for professionals both old & young
- more "leagues"- bowling, kickball, soccer, reading
- A RI theme song/dance
- More events like restaurant week
- Inter-neighborhood connections, partnerships, projects. East Siders "adopt" a par on the South Side or North Side, etc. vice-versa.
- Facilitated opportunities to break out of our insular neighborhoods.
- Create opportunities to succeed without BA or advanced degrees, let alone...elite education
- Strengths Based Pathways for students, young adults, career/pathway changing adults
- Better transportation
- Some change in school system
- Be able to get along and recognize each other
- Better communication
- Activate public spaces
- Need to work on spaces for communication and gathering
- Stronger relationship with government
- Facilitated Opportunities to think about, talk about, and act on space, place, self, race,
- More involve with local associations.
- More inclusive structure.
- To feel safe.
- More food access and less wastefulness.
- Re-energized the community.

- Target the under serve population in RI.
- To improve the arts and culture in providence.
- The creative / artistic side of people being more vocal or expressed. Be more outspoken of the positive side to people.
- * (paraphrasing) "I observed that people in my community were very egocentric but in a selfish way. I want to empower people (in underprivileged/underserved neighborhoods) to realize that there is something greater than themselves. This will give them a greater sense of self. How can it be done? To humanize other people. Remove the stigmas attached to homelessness, addiction, etc."
- * Be more welcoming to people reentering society from prison. Do not disenfranchise them. The cycle of reentry will never be broken until we empower people to help themselves with employment, education, and a connection to their neighbors and community. They need to feel like they are part of something. Helping individuals to help themselves helps the community as a whole and therefore society. "Don't educate, empower." "Connect the dots" in communities; our small size makes all of these things possible!
- More public transportations
- Affordable housing
 - Subsidization for people born/raised in the city
- Planters on Messer Street gone!
- Sad in the winter- doesn't vibe with summer/spring
- More community days- community cleanup
- More green space and Playgrounds (south side)
- Kaboom- built playground in a day, turn urban spaces into a funner space like a bus stop can also be a puzzle
 - Add an element to a space that already exists
 - Parking space park
- Providence needs to promote more for families
- More successful if we have one big multinational company that gives many jobs to people
- Reduce tax burden on people
- But negative side is that community can be too reliant on company – fall apart if multinational company leaves.
- Find more good candidates for political office
- Economic development much like in Washington DC
- More streets where there are restaurants and shops (like Wayland Square, Wickenden, etc.)
- Local neighborhood development – boutiques
- Remove parking meters to encourage more people to go to these areas
- Stop tolling in Rhode Island
- 60% of money goes into operating expenses
- 17 new toll booths currently being created – truckers getting taxed
- Recreate business district on Mount Hope, North Main Street – businesses part of a community – this used to be the case 30 years ago
- Economic energy part of community energy
- Community leaders left/died, businesses left – that's why businesses district died too

- More interconnectedness between different groups – more public spaces – building cross sector (community) etc. organizations
- Change in school system, tenured teachers of poor quality limiting opportunities for new teachers
- Increase in owner occupied homes, investing in businesses
- Decentralization of power – empowering people across different communities
- Utilizing past students in programs as mentors
- Assimilating and adapting to place and business culture
- Building curriculum and basic language skills
- When people are engaged – they do better
- More resources for immigrants and existing skills – create opportunities for new arrivals
- Most employers looking for employees and transferable skills
- Looking at staff as uniquely individuals
- Dynamics of looking at what each brings
- Create strategic partnerships in schools with companies and higher education (Jr. Achievement)
- Get entrepreneur bug in our youth
- Strategic partnerships
- Let things happen organically
- Restored vibrant Armory in use
- See state bring in opportunities to get kids outside to play and be active
- Use community activity to clean up playground
- Embody the “Creative Capital” arts
- Continued development, modern development
- More people support more businesses
- Diversity of businesses/ more diverse neighborhood
- Improve infrastructure
- Increasing inclusiveness on East Side
- Safety
- More food access and less food deserts
- State House Association to re-energize neighborhood to action to happen – past election promises
- Have Real Jobs RI be successful
- Have Neighborhood Association acting as connective tissue
- Arts & culture community as economic driver
 - Providence International Arts Festival
 - Art to spill outside Providence
 - Taking what we have and packaging it to others so they'll want to be here
 - Arts as social change
 - Arts & social services
 - The silos have not broken down
 - Arts can open up the communication in a safe way
- Creating atmospheres where people feel comfortable and express dialogue
- State to get out of the way and allow people to be creative

- Training for the permit-ers
- Be creative by policy
- State level advertising around arts and our creativity
- Tax incentive to put a stage in a bar
- Open up new art havens
- Rich culture, people who want to stay, how to tap into that
 - Don't bring outside experts, ask people who live here already
- Need an organization that is for the sole purpose of helping small businesses navigate the system
- Long term investment in community – engage all people in the following:
 - Education
 - Politics
 - Race
- Engage new generation
- Empowered education
- Justice system
- Infrastructure
- Health wellness
- Social enterprise
- Connections
 - All connected
- Educate that we are all in it together
- Social pressure to do the right thing

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Sharing ideas, more of this
- Continuity of these events
- Focus on specific actionable ideas
- More environmentally sustainable community?
- Inspire me to get motivated and get back into community and social activities
- Our neighborhood association fell off, but maybe I should reenergize it
- Hold a social meeting at my house to discuss a shared interest
- Coordinate a big event between two or more neighborhood organizations
- Learn how to apply the strengths finder to engage people to make a difference in our community based on what they like to do (e.g., someone may not want to sit in a meeting, but would want to make a cake for it), helps them feel more engaged
- Get more involved in the middle ring
- Feel like we are at a tipping point
- Old attitudes ("it's always been done that way," "that's never been done before") are changing. Sometimes need to start fresh, create a new model in order to have models for future achievers "be the change" Provide inspiration.
- people, esp. kids have more informed views than in the past because of Internet and the empowerment and engagement of youth more than in the past

- Connecting people with forums like this one, encouraging volunteerism
- Finding role models and mentors for youth
- pushing kids to go beyond high school education and finding ways to make that affordable and achievable
- Promoting Rhode Island outside of the state
- Social entrepreneurship
- Multiple bottom lines
- Staying connected after this event
- Be positive, make commitment to focus on strengths of Rhode island
- Offering strengths test to more communities, free.
- Stronger interconnections with concrete goals for realizing this
- Be ambassadors for the great things happening in RI
- An expectation, requirement that projects foster partnerships
- Urgency for change...because we are all in this together. If we put our positive energies together we can build an asset for the greater good of everyone.
- Need strong leaders.
- LRI convene leaders across industry for facilitated conversation on race, equity, opportunity
- Initiative to bring diversity back and stop segregation.
- Swapping board members to make change.
- Neighborhood associations
- More resources for under privilege community.
- Someone here solves the education problem like a bolt of lightning
- More collaboration amongst "middle ringers"
 - Providence provide those opportunities
 - Follow up/ initiative to get everyone who leaves here to join a civic group to help their town
 - More nonprofit/profit partnerships
 - Good ideas partnered with financial capital
 - Year Up and Hasbro
- Opportunities like this event – uniting people across different communities
- More university – community interactions
 - Inviting international students to help within the refugee population
 - The international communities of different campuses can collaborate
- Giving parents a home/a place to speak, translation services
- Parental engagement
- Companies to open programs for sensitivity training – teach employees how to interact and those who are different than them
- Industry professionals/partners come together and have a dialogue to see what the risk/benefits are; risk out weighs
- More personal involvement in community
 - I can't expect change if I don't participate
- Get one of the table members on the Fox Point Neighborhood email list serve
- Research teacher layoff contract clauses to allow more profitability for new teachers
- Join a BI group

SCITUATE

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- They are all republicans in the community and they all stick together
- They are also very good with their money and they love their community.
- They don't want the community to change as in they want to keep it simple.
- It's a small community where we all know one another.
- The art festival is a great place for people to get together.
- Taxes are frozen at the age of 65.
- RI food prices and quality are second to none

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Scituate doesn't have sidewalks
- Don't see people
 - Would move to Providence soon for interactions
 - Has given up on middle ring
- Home value declining – very slow to come back

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- You need to understand the ramifications of all laws that are passed.
- Scituate Art Show to be more imaginative – more of a sense of adventure
 - Bring diversity to audience
- Create a 3-4 star restaurant in neighborhood

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- That someone at a higher level influences the town council in a positive way.
- Education across the state should be equal. If all police departments went out and bought new cars together they would be cheaper. We are too top heavy in the positions for the schools.
- Friendlier environment

SMITHFIELD & NORTH SMITHFIELD

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- University in town (Bryant listed in top 5), large regional headquarters for national/international companies. Lots of big minds in in Smithfield - great job of bringing people in. One challenge though is that people who are there and haven't left don't really want to change and grow with the new development in the town. Diverse ideas, but there should be a more healthy evolution of the town, because it could be a great place on the map.
- Need to improve infrastructure if improving and increasing the development of the area (I.e. Smithfield Crossing and over near Bryant). Strength - great community, well-known and respected schools, very safe.
- Do you know why more people don't live in Smithfield, and just work in Smithfield? Smithfield has a lot of great opportunities, but are they investing in developing the town not just their jobs?
- Mostly just coming in and out of the town, but are starting to see more people staying (slow increase, but definitely there). With more retail etc. coming into Smithfield, it is helping keep people there because it's convenient, but other communities still are comfortable with using those opportunities.
- There is a lot for open space that is available for development, which could be controversial, but still is an opportunity. Grow young leader populace?! (I.e. New housing, etc.)
- Close to Mass, which brings a lot of people into communities from even different states.
- Could NS and Smithfield combine to make one large group? Because there are a lot of people in NS that would benefit from the lots of opportunities in Smithfield.
- Northern RI used to be all one large community and they broke up for economic reasons but could rejoin just no one wants to.
- Tradition in the community is a really big strength.
- Should begin to grow new opportunities - have a lot of natural resources, but don't really grow with the newer culture. More local, home-grown, strengthen the culture, work with young people things that could exist but don't take full opportunity of resources.
- In NS, we have a lot of home-grown businesses that are steeped in town tradition, which is really nice. But why are we focusing on smaller communities, when the state is just a 1 hour long drive?
- There are different ways of life in states that are not as accessible... And here in RI we sometimes miss opportunities to mimic some of those ideas of bigger state communities.
- How can life-long Rhode Islanders get those nuances? There is a lot of naïveté for in-staters because it is so small and accessible.
- Something to appreciate about RI because everything is so close and you're able to get whatever you need within almost a five minute drive.
- It's so easy just to say no, due to transports on or lack of accessibility, and we are missing out on new things because of that.
- Financial and natural resources (pleasure/life)
- Sports and recreation for children/families (culture)

- Substance abuse task force – peer involved students
- Growth and development potential (e.g. Fidelity)
- Wellness programs in schools (e.g. grow own salad bars)
 - Whole Foods program could connect
- Location, location, location
 - 12 minutes to Providence
 - 50 minutes to Boston
 - Local foods, farms, restaurants
- Smaller town – close knit
 - Schools
 - Sports
 - Recreation
 - Community
- Proactivity on creating task forces to face issues
- Festivals, community programs – from art to food to holidays to music
- Chinese numbers in program better elementary schools
 - Bryant and older schools
- RI Philharmonic exchange program in elementary school
- Close involvement of fire, police department in schools

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Already hit on logistics, infrastructure, and transportation.
- Transplants to these small towns aren't really welcomed with open arms. (Small town) Townies aren't really supportive of new people because they don't react well to change (in reference to NL's comments above). With new neighbors, it's a little easier to be friendly because they're coming with the 'outsider' mindset too.
- Talked about Smithfield Rotary and invited MC to come to Wednesday community breakfasts at Bryant.
- As a townie, she appreciates in-comers. But RI mentality to not interfere with other people's establishment and is more comfortable to wait for other people to introduce themselves to them.
- His profession allows him to have intimate conversations with patrons. Townies really don't want to leave and hold on to preconceived notions of other places (I.e. "If you go to providence you'll get murdered!" Comment from a client)
- Cultural stagnation. 'It is what it is and its fine so why extend boundaries?' Mentality.
- Find more new things to do for millennials - give people who come in to, for example, Bryant or Navigant or Fidelity, a reason to stay. Bring more people around social events!
- Outreach from colleges to the public would be nice. Like URI grads get emails about the plays and cultural events etc., and RIC reaches out about concerts and stuff, but Smithfield residents don't hear about anything going on at Bryant. Some more outreach to local community would be nice.
- Bryant could be a cultural hub for Smithfield. Could use better communication to broadcast these assets!

- Bureaucratic processes (e.g. small business owner, resident, etc.) of town
- Lack of diversity and its effect on kids/general population
- Drug abuse from lack of clean pathways in small town culture
- Compartmentalized mentality, not open enough as community members (tunnel vision)
- Putting town reputation ahead of more individual issues of substance abuse, bullying, etc. (speak up)
- Overdevelopment (zoning); lack of leadership on strategic planning (town center up, business, and traffic)
- Childhood obesity issues and lack of program change
- Community wide communication (e.g. could have improved outputs if communication better)

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Would like the Town Council and school community to have better interactions. Affecting teachers, students. Must invest in the schools more.
- Symptom of larger problem - self-esteem issue in RI. Workforce was battered (in 2008 RI gained back less jobs than we lost in the recession) Employers look at employees lower than they are, so employees become disengaged. Start at the city/town level. Grow and work with the strengths of the populace. NS schools have a great reputation, so need to focus on promoting that with more respect. Applies to all areas of the workforce.
- There are some things that are really great about NS and some really great community activism groups, but need to emphasize those. Rebrand the town.
- Could do better at engaging people. Our state is great, and here's why! In terms of Smithfield: would like to see town take a more active role in its evolution. See individuals take a stronger role in revitalizing it.
- Need to realize that RI has talent (new growing introducing business etc.) and broadcast that.
- Small business growth, strategic but locally driven with community participation
- Higher graduation rate, higher diversity and inclusion, higher opportunity without losing the "small town"
- Improve budget – school to improve education experience and enable their opportunity/life plan
- Community input on all issues vs pressure from specific factions, individual must want to participate/make time
- Better, strategic development but return to small "town square" design/architecture to help enable walking/biking traffic and community interaction (lower car dependency/traffic)
- Higher healthy lifestyle options (pedestrian/bike pathways)
- Higher healthy community – outdoor access, environment awareness, higher recycling
- We are only as healthy as the most undeserved members of our community whether homeless, hungry, and abusing. Lift up all ships
- Don't lose small town traditions from homecoming to festivals to football games
- How can we make it possible/easier to get these done? (e.g. Activate community service how to help)

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Build a network of like-minded individuals. This, today, is the first step. Needs to come back to the smaller organizations in different communities - take this info and commentary home.
- What can NS and Smithfield bring to RI? Bring strengths to the entire state.
- Improved communication would be great. Adult learning opportunities would be really awesome, like this; organized educational events to focus on strengths, strengthen communications, and build a larger network throughout communities.

SOUTH KINGSTOWN

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Strength is the university of Rhode Island, collecting revenue and being run by state
- The beaches
- Students- \$ and helping community
- Networking
- Programs run by URI
- Everything so accessible
- Small hometown feeling
- Downtown Wakefield, nice feeling
- Different towns within one town
- No crime, no break ins
- Summer homes, students, families - such diversity
- Open space preserved
- Farmers markets
- Helping the children around us
- Wakefield's greatest strengths geographic location (proximity to ocean),
- bike paths,
- revenue from University of Rhode Island,
- Rotary, Lions and Elks Club.
- The churches
- the banks
- The community services for children and seniors.
- Geography, abandoned rail line, history, architecture
- Rights of way, water system, drive to preserve open spaces, beach
- Sea food and scenery, fishing industry, block island
- Can do many different things
- Isolation forcing together, people staying in the community, people grew up and stayed
- URI asset
- Downtown Wakefield
- Diversity of environment
- Sense of community
- Diversity of identities of places in SK

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Balancing the new blood with the college students
- Awareness
- Hard to promote the good activities
- Showing the "good" side of Greek life
- Including everybody

- Blending the school volunteers with corporate offices
- So many strengths and diverse options on the campus
- Open space and building
- artist designs bus alcoves for the RIPTA
- short sited ness
- Distribution of income
- Wakefield's main challenge is drainage. Flooding is a huge issue and without a public management system it will continue.
- Blending commercial and residential areas would help bring life to the city.
- Wakefield needs beautification for the city.
- Heroin is a problem for the age demographic 18-25, despite the clinics and shelters.
- Getting people to embrace being a part of wider Rhode Island
- Difficult integrating URI with the wider SK community, especially students, some conflict between students and community
- URI traffic gridlock
- How do we protect the character of SK, how do we stop it becoming a suburb, how do we protect the history, Larchwood Inn
- Jobs
- Housing, especially affordable housing
- Infrastructure
- Lack of impact at the state level
- Who to attract, families are a tax burden, retired people contribute to the tax base

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Recognize difference of privilege to help you community and solve problems, and know that you're helping your community
- More students giving back to the community
- It's YOUR responsibility too
- Awareness
- What can we as students do to help the residents get to peace
- More businesses coming to south Kingston (small or larger corporation
- Wakefield mall to grow to an actual mall
- More employment
- Wakefield could be improved by the addition of affordable housing. The town needs to encourage an influx of young families rather than the elderly population it is currently attracting.
- Opportunity for beautification of Peacedale and economic development
- Inter-generational connections
- Connection between URI and the community and the community and URI, opportunity to grow

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- More businesses
- More opportunities

- More students staying Rhode Island /More out of state students
- Knowing what your neighbors do
- Peacedale as a gem, farm to table
- Involvement with governance
- Staying involved in the community
- Making a difference on the small scale

WARREN

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Strong community relationships
- Deep roots (multiple generations of people)
- Quaint downtown areas
- Historic preservation
- Use of open space; natural beauty; sense of belonging through nature preserves and making them open to the public
- Beautiful open space; clean open area; Warren has everything to offer (theaters, restaurants, mom-and-pop shops)
- Number of people volunteering
- Small town welcoming community feel; small town charm; neighborhood connection; bike path; colt state park; recreational community feel
- Homeownership
- Massive amount of retirees for volunteerism
- Warren Animal Shelter (underfunded; understaffed; dilapidated)
- Linking the Warren Animal Shelter with the Bristol Animal Shelter; lessons learned from the Bristol Animal Shelter (Combining services)
- Trolley tour model event (art, shops, local businesses)
- Bridges the communities together; education system is unified; Art night*

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- The budget facing Warren (amount of overhead)
- Sharing services with other nearby communities; unable to support the level of government
- Teamwork
- Uninformed of the resources available within Warren-Bristol
- Drug problem (Warren-Bristol); Mentoring,
- Bristol-Warren websites not up-to-date with the current times

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Capitalize strengths with Warren, Bristol, and Barrington. Combined services of the towns.
- Strengthen relationships among the towns
- Leveraging ideas,
- Greater collaboration among town councils
- Animal Shelter (Separate but coordinated programs)
- Reaching the large retiree population (volunteerism)
- More welcoming to visitors (tourists)
- Teamwork between towns (keep small town feel but grow the mentality)

- Mandatory recycling
- Collaboration across the board (more efficient, economic development)
- Appreciate the similarities
- More communication regarding volunteerism (town's website)
- More communication of the opportunities available (welcome packet, mailing campaign, etc.)

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Joint effort among Bristol and Warren - How do we make the towns become more collaborative?
- Grassroots
- Private organizations become involved with town councils (town vision)
- Participation between LRI and the two town councils

WARWICK

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Proximity to highway - Other cities and towns could improve their access to highway
- Municipal services, police, fire, state of the art hospital
- Accessibility to legislators
- clear identity
- Access to major airport, malls, shopping, small town appeal
- Warwick is the epi center of the state
- Ownership over projects and ideas
- Interconnected
- Willingness to play in the sandbox
- Covert zoning to mixed uses to spread that "village" feel
- Warwick Public Library is a strength, open to bring community in
- Like that we have villages. Able to connect more. Was able to participate more on town meetings which were made up of local residence making decisions.
- The library system provides the most up-to-date books. Loved having the feeling of being in my living room while having that needed structure to study.
- The outdoors are wonderful. The set-up of how the communities are. There are a lot of younger families. Even in the cities you have a sense of the neighbors.
- Warwick is the public services, ex: Utilizes, Trash, Etc. We are in an established area.
- The leadership in the city is terrific. Loves having a republican in office. Rocky Point is "ours"; hope they continue pushing state parks.
- It doesn't feel like a big city, it still has the feeling of a suburb. I never feel if I am in danger. It is due to how we have evolved. There is no main street in Warwick. We developed together because we were ready.
- We do not have main stream businesses which help.
- I like how things are forward thinking. They are trying to bring industry here. All the improvements seem purposeful and well thought out. Progress has fast turnaround. The end outcomes from construction have wonderful outcomes.
- All the decisions being made are being done with the community in mind. It is not because of the businesses; Warwick is making it worth for their current residences. It is that sense of pride in the community. They make neighborhood associations and other such structures to connect everyone.
- We were the first in many, like the Compost Plant we have. We do a lot with a little money.
- The villages have their own different personalities. These differences are communicated and people see what is going on.
- Having common meetings places provide support in our work.
- "Friends of Greenwood" FB Page (Activities get people out of the house)
- "Code Red" Texting System & Messages from Council Members make it more personal.
- The Warwick Website is well constructed.
- In Good Shape.
- Restaurants on the waterfront are beautiful

- Rocky point, Warwick neck association, safety, proximity to the city, airport access, public works service, affordability of land and property and water access, riverview association, neighbors
- Warwick firefighter soccer league
- Proximity to Providence and access to the highway is close. It has worked in West Warwick, Cranston is also improving access and it is a reason why Gaspee has been a popular place to live.
- Municipal services we have--proximity to hospital, police nearby, trash collection, etc. All of these services are really good and that is not the case everywhere. The city does a good job of making sure we have a budget to prioritize these services.
- Ability to get in touch with your legislatures easily is strength. You know who to speak to if you have a question, who to celebrate when you're pleased with
- A major airport right here is a plus and getting into the city easily but also going to shop in any store you would like--all of this is near or in Warwick.
- When you give ownership to the people, it brings them to the table and it keeps them engaged.
- Connectedness and a small town feel are helpful. Avedisian is accessible and is willing to respond to his constituents.
- Pawtuxet Village has brought Warwick and Cranston together to build a sense of community across city lines. We are a state of villages and they play a vital role in a feeling of connectedness here but where there are other villages as well.
- Warwick Public Library provides a phenomenal service ("a model library") and the programming allows you to get to know a lot of new people. They are super willing to accommodate groups and their public space is really easy to use. They are open to bringing the community in. They have a lot to share (best practices) with the rest of the state.
- Shopping capital of Rhode Island; has a lot of industry. Unlike Providence, Warwick makes it easy for businesses to have free parking
- Good leadership under Mayor Avedisian – takes charge to school problems
 - Republican in Democratic state
- Strong leadership overall
- Warwick Historical Society – working to enhance tourism clean historic cemeteries restored historic homes
- New homes coming
- Boating activities
- Warwick Art Museum – Ocean State Theatre
- Warwick Police – emerging services near all schools
- Warwick Public Library, Thayer Arena, Mererrat Pad, playground or parks, CCRI, including location – malls
- Good senior centers, consignments shops
- Everything in Warwick easy to get to
- Farms
- Two movie theaters
- 44 miles of coastline
- Rocky point
- Developing parks

- Friendly community
- Love costive – Oakland Beach, Connecticut, etc.
- Airport – easy access
- Center of the state – 20 minutes to anywhere
- Ideas that can benefit other communities
 - Public park like Point and capitalize on coastline – make friendly to public develop areas to make community friendly
 - Bigger city – hometown flavor. Accepting “outsiders” unlike other towns that may be “clique-y”
 - Farm on Centerville Road developed for farm to table programs
 - Nest bay community action
 - Collaborates with neighboring communities
 - If other communities did what Warwick Historical Society does – clean up city sites
 - Our sites attract film producers and tourists (Aldrich)

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Don't know my neighbors
- Flood insurance
- Challenges to sell waterfront property
- School are good but could be great...and thee seems to a lack of desire for greatness.
- My neighborhood is disappearing because of the airport. It's redefining the area.
- Losing our identity
- Traffic,
- Airplane Noise.
- Leaving off Warwick Ave. there are a lot of buildings that look rundown or empty. The telephone poles look lopsided.
- Public transportation, non-existent. There are no trains at night. You can't really rely on Public Transit.
- I have never taken public transit. The times are not friendly (not often enough).
- Warwick Ave. doesn't look pleasant, we get blinded from it, it is concert upon concert...not all of it, but even Post Rd looks nicer.
- We have parks and other nice amenities, however the road is ugly, and no one take care of the weeds or anything.
- People are concerned with the Jr. Highs and High Schools.
- We avoided Public Schools completely. I know many who have moved, or have relocated their children once they hit 6th grade. They will not have their kids go into those schools.
- Jr. High and High Schools are falling apart; there are a lot of schools that merge together.
- Our doctor recommended to stay in Private School, based on personal experience with the education administration.
- I have had friends that have relocated their children because they felt other families didn't care about the education provided so the ones that care are leaving. Quality education is not being produced.
- We have neighborhoods that are still struggling, and have been for some time.

- Friends have recommended not going to City Park, unsafe and trash is a reoccurring issue. We use to go swimming when you were little, but not anymore. That would be a horrible decision.
- The airport doesn't affect my area too bad, so I am limited in my opinion.
- I am in the path way of the airplane. You can see the planes. The noise factor is something to look at. Having to stop your conversation because of the sound.
- I think I'm numb to it. It only affects you in the summer.
- We had friends over that didn't live in Warwick, and we stop talking when a plane came over, so it was very surprising to them when it happened.
- I am concerned about the effects of the sounds for the local schools.
- I am concerned because of the safety to the schools with the path of the airplanes.
- The quality of the roads are terrible, just talking about city roads. They really need to fix it.
- Snow!!! Sidewalks need to be cleaned, good neighbor rule. Roads can be improved.
- Cost of property taxes, sewer upgrades, population decline, school closings, economy, fear of change but want change, people are not taking the time to understand issues before offering opinions. People not open to new ideas. Our size as a state is hurting us. Hate to be compared with other states as we are not on the same playing field from a population standpoint. Price of housing preventing young families from moving
- I don't know my neighbors. There is no neighborhood block party or convening to get to know those around them. Those with children tend to be out and about but those that don't. They're dynamic (neighborhoods) and can depend on when you move in on whether you know your neighbors or not.
- We can silo ourselves in times other than crisis.
- IDEA: Let' have a statewide "meet your neighbor day!!" Perhaps we could leverage the post office and send a piece of mail to bring (postcard? letter?) to your neighbor. OR, perhaps girl scouts and boy scouts could take on a project that somehow participates in a meet your neighbor campaign. You can get a scout badge for having a neighborhood gathering?
- Greenwood is disappearing. It's having to be redefined. The center of Greenwood is likely going to change. It feels like a loss of identity
- The airport patterns have changed and it's louder. It cuts the city in half and there is a whole part of Warwick now that doesn't feel as connected.
- Conimicut (sp?) Point is so beautiful but flood insurance is skyrocketing and makes it tough for folks who can't afford and to sell is tough too.
- Good schools that could be great but it doesn't feel like there is momentum or a desire to be great.
- Development
- Urban sprawl – traffic
- Number of cars
- Need better public transportation in Warwick
- Education
 - School consolidation
 - Infrastructure during enrollment
 - Image problem
 - Teachers don't have contract – morale down
 - Lack of leadership, administration, or school commitment
- Economy

- Need something to draw young people into state
- Taxes
- Roads
- Bridges
- Airport pollution – expansion
- CCRI prof
 - Some of the best students coming from Johnston and Central Falls

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Neighborhood schools going from good to great.
- A passion for quality education at all tiers, administrative, teachers, families, students, and community.
- Redefine the communities near the airport expansion intentionality.
- Help families move and covert the remaining space to a community park.
- Create smoother traffic patterns in congested areas - west shore road, Main ave, airport road
- Safe sidewalks
- Racial Diversity in my neighborhood
- Meet you neighbor day. Connect with Boys and Girls Scout programs to create a service project around a meet your neighbor day. Expand from here to include YMCA's and Boys and Girls club or youth programs for service learning.
- More green space, and have bike ways. If you ride your bike in the city your life is on the line. This is not a biking city. A friend of mine got hit while biking. It would be nice to create dedicated areas for walking and biking. Driving is really the only option, because as we have identified with public transit, that is an issue in itself.
- Beautifications; you will encourage locals to be active in the community and promote the well-being of the city.
- I would love for my neighborhood to bury our Telephone Poles.
- Do something with the old houses in Warwick, do not torn them down, redo them.
- Would like to see what there productions are for the future.
- Would be nice to connect community centers to the city (inside the city).
- They should work on the reputation for each area, and work to improve and enhance their identities. Look at their marketing and campaigning. They should look at focusing on the local, RI population.
- Look at the ecosystem before making decisions. When you cut or trim a tree could be animals that live there. After a storm, when you remove the "waste" it could be home to a family of squirrels.
- Sidewalks, speedbumps and stop signs in Gaspee/lake view to improve safety.
- Less road construction.
- Better drainage system.
- School consolidation problem resolved.
- Execute on city center.
- Need for Norwood association.
- Sewer system plan and appropriate cost share.
- Schools are great.

- A focus on helping the neighborhoods impacted by the airport find a way to improve, find a sense of connectedness. Or remove the remaining houses, build a park and give the houses impacted the most. Smoother traffic patterns and ease the congestion could help.
- The ability to walk through all the neighborhoods and be more wheelchair accessible. Sidewalks that are well maintained.
- A more diverse community.
- Better roads and infrastructure
- Better public transportation
 - Improved bus routes, less cars – no one is patient to wait for buses, smaller buses
- Improved education
 - Communication with school committee
 - Full day Kindergarten across city
 - Consolidation that makes sense for tax payers and families to strengthen overall education for all
 - Increase improvement after school sports and activities for children
- The city has so many assets, it should have an excellent school system
- Lower taxes/efficiency
- Better restaurants – farm to table
- Neighborhoods
 - Do you know your neighbors?
 - Warwick Neck – association does events, sends out e-newsletter. Connecticut Village association – holding pumpkin event in a park
 - Norwood – is a neighborhood association but don't have time to go making worry moms – we're not home, don't know neighbors
 - North Greenwood – quick interactions at Halloween
 - Governor Francis - not neighbors in after-effects of storm people here home or come outside

What would the best thing that could happen for your community based on your participation here today?

- Meet your neighbor day actually happens
- A tunnel under the airport to create smoother traffic
- That ideas discussed become realities and not just conversations
- Progress would not put Small business out of business.
- We should have community meetings around the cities. This meeting could be something to start a lot smaller group decisions.
- A lot of this is individual based. Go out and apply it to our work in our communities.
- The benefits are worth the costs.
- Resolution of school consolidation
- We find there are similarities among other groups that spoke about Warwick and something more develops after today.
- Having our neighbors get to know each other (Meet your Neighbor)--comment from above.
- If we start the ripple and get more people involved
- Start block parties, get to know neighbors
- Make connections

WEST WARWICK

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- West Warwick's public schools offer a great deal as far as technology, ability-inclusive exposure, and athletics.
- The young families in West Warwick are the voice for town improvement.
- West Warwick is centrally located but certainly not urban.

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- West Warwick is facing serious economic challenges that prevent it from expanding commercially.
- West Warwick has a drug problem.
- Transient housing lends itself to community problems.

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- West Warwick needs momentum and unification in community leadership.
- The athletic areas that already exist could build onto their sports areas to bring in commercial revenue.

WESTERLY

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Major tourism focus which is seasonally between Memorial to Labor Day
- Preservation of natural resources, environmental safety important within community
- Low taxes
- Revitalization of town – outs community
- Presentation of waterfront
 - Versus Providence
 - What about Boston presenting Bay
 - Similar to Chicago
- Quality of Life
- Comradery of businesses
 - Business Association

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Lack of public transportation – feel stuck in Westerly
- There is Amtrak but expensive and not great schedule
- Lack of workforce affordable
- Not enough hotels in Westerly and wants the revenue coming into the city
 - If you can't afford the Ocean House, what is another alternative that we can provide?

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- Westerly collaboration with CCRI for job training and skills developed
 - Also partnering with General Dynamics
- Young people want to be in Sand County
 - No brain drain
- Break the Westerly mold of Italian industrial community
- More trans plans
- More people outside of Westerly/Charlestown to come live here
- Better quality of life
- Pull people from NY to bring their skills, talents, and diversity
- Sell the quality of life, Rhode Island needs to sell the quality of life
- More people to think outside of the box

WOONSOCKET

What is the greatest strength of the place you live? What idea that has worked in your community could benefit the other members of this table or other communities in Rhode Island?

- Location, near Worcester, Boston, Providence. Culture is great- a little bit bipolar because some people are proud to be from Woonsocket and some are not. Good services, healthcare options.
- Strong heritage of the City. Autumnfest brings everyone together once a year, should do more events like that to strengthen sense of community.
- Strong heritage. Access to other areas. Old-timers appreciate what the City used to be.

What is the greatest challenge that you believe your city/town/community/neighborhood is facing currently?

- Economic development. Tax rate is so high and many businesses have left. Very high car taxes. No full service grocery store in the City.
- Going to be hard to sell house eventually. Taxes are too high. Schools are not good. Community has lost hope. Leadership is poor.
- Need to attract people who want to stay in the City, not just young professionals who move there for convenience and then leave.

What is your vision for your particular geography as you define it - city/town/community/neighborhood - in the next three to five years?

- People need a reason to come into the City. We need someone to come in from the outside, assess, and shake things up. We need a Donald Trump type figure.
- We should utilize our resources better. Capitalize on our strengths of history, arts and culture. We should be partnering with Woonsocket Career/Technical School.
- What are we doing to attract new generation? Millennials are all about working together.

Community Meetings and Statewide Convening facilitated by the 2015 Lambda II Class

Katje Afonseca (North Providence), *Director of Development, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Ocean State*

Danielle Alpher (Narragansett), *Cloud Solutions Executive-Global Channel Partnerships, Verizon*

Holly Ashton (Newport), *Industry Relations Coordinator, IYRS School of Technology & Trades*

Shameem Awan (Providence), *Assistant Vice President, Amica Insurance*

Jacquelyn Baginski (Cranston), *Director of Sales & Marketing, Professional Ambulance*

Ting Barnard (Providence), *Philanthropist/Community Activist*

Kristin Battisti (Westerly), *Vice President/Compliance Officer, The Washington Trust Company*

Andrew Bramson (Providence), *Deputy Director, The Providence Plan*

Kate Bubrick (Providence), *Co-Founder/Community Organizer, Rhode Island Is Ready*

Wendy Bucci (South Kingstown), *Chief Operations Officer, University of Rhode Island Foundation*

Lisa Carcieri (Pawtucket), *Senior Manager of Marketing and Advertising, Neighborhood Health Plan of RI*

Jennifer Carnevale (Johnston), *Manager, Regional Human Resources, Fidelity Investments*

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Robert Creamer (Warwick), *Sergeant, Rhode Island State Police*

David Curtis (Warwick), *Director of Marketing and Strategic Initiatives, Bishop Hendricken High School*

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Stephen Del Sesto (East Providence), *Partner, Donoghue Barrett & Singal PC*

Kelly Donnell (Barrington), *Dean, School of Education, Roger Williams University*

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Vinny Gebhart (Warwick), *Developer, Preventure*

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Peter Langevin (Burrillville), *National Manager, Retail Merchandising, United Natural Foods, Inc.*

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Stephanie Mandeville (Cranston), *Communications and Marketing Director, Beacon Mutual Insurance Company*

Glen Martin (Cumberland), *Consultant, Certified Financial Planner*

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Nicole Yonkman (Providence), *Senior Co-Minister, Beneficent Congregational Church, United Church of Christ*

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” – Margaret Mead



LEADERSHIP

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Leadership Rhode Island creates and supports a legacy of leaders for the state.

Our Mission

The mission of Leadership Rhode Island is to provide leaders and emerging leaders with knowledge and access to resources which will enable them to positively affect their communities.

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