



UPWP - Organizational Structure

The Statewide Planning Program in Rhode Island is overseen by the [State Planning Council](#) (SPC) and is staffed by the Department of Administration's Division of Statewide Planning (RIDSP). The SPC was originally designated by the Governor as the MPO in 1974. In 2013, Rhode Island General Law, [§ 42-11-10](#), was amended to designate the Council as the State's single, statewide MPO. The twenty-seven-person membership of the SPC / MPO is enumerated in the Law which was further amended in 2019 to add additional local elected officials to the Council and specify the affiliations of several of the Governor's appointees.

A SPC/MPO handbook provides an overview of responsibilities of the Council. [The Handbook](#) is to help members of the Council and others to understand the mission and functions of the Council and Statewide Planning Program. Each chapter explains a key aspect of the Council's duties and is updated periodically when needed. The SPC and its four standing committees follow adopted [Rules and Standards](#) which were last updated in 2022 and are updated on a periodic basis when needed. The three advisory committees required by Statute are described below. The intent of the committees is to ensure representation of diverse interests and views in MPO and state level planning activities.

- **Rhode Island Geographic Information System Executive Committee (RIGIS)** provides policy guidance and coordination of efforts of organizations in Rhode Island using geographic information systems (GIS) technology. It coordinates data development, adopts technical standards, and sets distribution policy for GIS products. Membership includes individuals with GIS expertise, including those in federal, state, and local government, education, consulting services, and utility operations.
- **Technical Committee** provides advice and feedback to the staff of the RIDSP on the development of major plans, as well as other items as requested by the SPC. Membership includes representatives of state agencies, local planning departments, citizens from different areas of the State, and federal advisory members.
- **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)** provides advice on transportation planning and encourages public involvement in the process. The TAC reviews and provides input for transportation planning documents and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Membership includes local officials, state agencies, organizations representing a variety of transportation interests, citizens from different areas of the State, the Narragansett Indian Tribe, and federal advisory members.

The State Planning Council is also supported by several other advisory committees not required by Statute but used help to implement topic specific plans, solicit public input, and implement the Missions of the RIDSP. These are the:

- **Bicycle Mobility Advisory Committee** is convened as needed to review and advise on proposals, programs, projects, and plans related to bicycle planning, to provide program ideas for implementation of *Rhode Island Moving Forward*, [Statewide Bicycle Mobility Plan](#), to provide a regional perspective on transportation planning, ensure participation with broad public input and community viewpoints, and to provide guidance to state agencies on issues concerning bicycle planning.
- **Freight Advisory Committee** provides policy guidance for freight transportation planning, provides collaboration between the public and private sectors, assists in the implementation of [Freight Forward RI](#),

[2022](#), provides input on regional transportation policies that impact freight movements, promotes public recognition of freight's importance in the regional economy, and provides regional coordination to address problems of shared interest.

RIDSP is allocated 25 full-time employees (FTE) within the Department of Administration. (See Figure 2, *Organizational Chart*.) The Statewide Planning / MPO staff is assigned 21 full time positions of which 18 are currently fully staffed with 4 vacancies to be filled for: a supervising planner and senior planner on the Transportation Team and a principal planner on the Data Team. One FTE (a chief implementation aide) is shared 50/50 between the MPO and the [Water Resources Board](#). The remaining 4 FTE positions are under the Water Resources Board, and all are staffed.

The Statewide Planning/ MPO staff work on community coordination, comprehensive community planning, data collection & analysis, GIS, land use & natural resources planning, municipal transportation and land use education, transportation planning, and other related MPO topics. RIDSP also closely collaborates with other agencies in fulfilling its duties, particularly those related to transportation planning. These agencies include:

[Rhode Island Department of Transportation](#) (RIDOT) – The MPO works cooperatively with RIDOT in carrying out all its transportation and air quality activities. RIDOT serves on the Technical Committee, TAC, Freight Advisory Committee, and the Bicycle Advisory Committee and is a key partner in the implementation of the State's Congestion Management Process. In addition, RIDOT serves as the conduit for the metropolitan planning funds the State receives from the FHWA and the FTA. RIDOT has a voting seat on the State Planning Council.

[Rhode Island Public Transit Authority](#) (RIPTA) – The MPO works cooperatively with RIPTA, the only provider of public bus transit in the State. RIPTA has many responsibilities including capital and service bus transit needs, identifying bus transit projects for inclusion in the STIP. RIPTA serves on the TAC, and the Bicycle Advisory Committee. RIPTA has a voting seat on the State Planning Council.

[Department of Environmental Management](#) (RIDEM) – The MPO works cooperatively with RIDEM compliance with the Recreational Trails Program and the Clean Air Act. This includes the development and adoption of an air quality plan known as the State Implementation Plan and implementation of the Transportation Conformity Air Pollution Control Regulation. RIDEM serves on the Technical Committee and the TAC. RIDEM has a voting seat on the State Planning Council. RIDEM is now home to the State Resilience Officer position and coordinates the ongoing work of the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4), on which RIDSP has a statutory seat.

[Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources](#) – (OER) - The MPO works cooperatively with OER to develop policies, plans, and programs that respond to the State's evolving energy, land use, and transportation needs, while advancing environmental sustainability, energy security, and a vibrant clean energy economy. OER has a voting seat on the State Planning Council.

[Figure 2, Organizational Chart](#)