



May 2025

## "Ready, Set, Rhody" Will Help Small Businesses Districts in RI

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, along with the RI Division of Statewide Planning, has received funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration for "Ready, Set, Rhody" to provide targeted infrastructure vulnerability assessments to municipalities. These assessments will include high-level information on specific "hot spots" of vulnerability to extreme weather events and flooding in twelve municipalities around Rhode Island. The project will also include outreach to local small businesses in vulnerable business districts on ways to increase resilience and disaster readiness strategies.

The communities/business districts included in the project are:

- Newport (Thames Street)
- Westerly (Downtown)
- Warren (Water Street)
- North Kingstown (Wickford)
- Providence (Olneyville & Valley)
- Bristol (Thames Street)
- Warwick (Apponaug)
- Block Island/ New Shoreham (Downtown)
- West Warwick (Arctic)
- South Kingstown (Peacedale)
- Portsmouth (Island Park)
- Smithfield (Esmond/Smith)



The project consultant is Fuss & O'Neill, who has already started to review existing data and will schedule interviews with municipal officials to learn more about local flooding locations and issues.

In 2019, the Division of Statewide Planning completed the Risk Reduction For Small Business Resiliency in Rhode Island project, which created downloadable risk prevention guides and vulnerability checklists for small businesses. The Ready, Set, Rhody project builds on this effort by providing municipal infrastructure assessments and recommendations to further support small business resilience.

## Active Transportation Technical Assistance Awarded

In early March, the Division of Statewide Planning announced



our 2025 [Municipal Technical Assistance Program](#) solicitation, seeking applications from municipalities interested in support for planning projects to enhance active transportation opportunities, increase mobility choice, and promote walkability and bike-ability of neighborhoods.

We are pleased to announce that the Town of Lincoln has been chosen for assistance for their submission of the "Saylesville Complete Streets Corridor Study." Supervising Planner Josh O'Neill, AICP says, "Lincoln identified the need for improved sidewalks, protected on-street bike lanes, and a redesign of local roadways and intersection connections with state roads to reduce crashes and increase safety for all road users. It's going to be a great project."

For questions regarding this project or our program, please contact Josh O'Neill at [Joshua.Oneill@doa.ri.gov](mailto:Joshua.Oneill@doa.ri.gov) or 401-222-4849.

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## 2025 APA-RI Award Winners

The [Rhode Island Chapter](#) of the [American Planning Association](#) has announced [the winners](#) of their 2025 Chapter awards:



- Award for Excellence in Plan Implementation: *Chepachet Village Revitalization Plan*- Town of Glocester
- Award for Planning for Resilience and Sustainability: *Ready and Resilient Barrington Climate Action Plan*- Barrington Department of Planning, Building & Resilience, Kim Lundgren Associates, Barrington Town Council
- Award for Excellent Plan: *Old Tower Hill Road Neighborhood Plan*- South Kingstown Planning Department
- Award for Excellence in Housing Planning: *Newport Buildout Analysis/Comprehensive Plan Housing Chapter Update*- City of Newport, Libra Partners
- Paul Davidoff Award (for planning that helps transform distressed neighborhoods): 183 Washington Street Project, West Warwick- Women's Development Corp., Union, Commonwealth Engineers
- Dan Varin Memorial Leadership Award [for sustained contributions to the profession through distinguished practice]: Jane Weidman
- President's Award for Outstanding Service to the Chapter: Jason Parker, AICP
- Student Award: The Jaycee Arboretum & Senator Roch Riverwalk, West Warwick- URI Landscape Architecture Program, RIDEM, West Warwick Jaycees Alumni Association, Jaycee Arboretum Project

Congratulations, everyone!

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## Upcoming Statewide Planning Meetings

[Drought Steering Committee of the WRB](#)

May 14 - 9AM

PHOTO TRIVIA

Rm 300, 235 Promenade St. Providence

[Water Resources Board - Special Meeting](#)

**May 14 - 11:30AM**

Rm 300, 235 Promenade St. Providence

[Water Resources Board](#)

**May 21 - 9AM**

Room 2A, 1 Capitol Hill (DOA), Providence

[Transportation Advisory Committee](#)

**May 22 - 5:30PM**

Rm 300, 235 Promenade St. Providence

[Planners' Roundtable/Technical Committee](#)

**June 6 - 2:30PM**

Barrington Public Library, Collier Family Gallery

*All meetings are open to the public.*

Do you know where in Rhode Island you can find this building?



See the answer at the bottom of the newsletter!

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## Municipal Training



### What's New

- [Division of Statewide Planning Newsletter](#)
- [RI Local Officials Training:](#)
  - [2025 Municipal Land Use Education Program](#)
  - [2024 Evaluation Report](#)
- [Upcoming Workshops:](#)
  - [April 8, 2025](#)
- [2024 Legislative Summary](#)

Learn about the next Municipal Land Use Training for Rhode Island Local Officials under the "What's New" section of [our homepage](#).

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## Events

*Events may be held in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format.*

**May 1 - 30 [Rhode Island Cemetery Weeks](#).** Annual event features tours, clean-ups, gravestone conservation demonstrations, and talks that raise awareness about Rhode Island's local historic cemeteries and promote their preservation. All events are free.

**May 1 - 30 [2025 RIPTA No Pollute Commute Bike to Work Challenge](#)** Rhode Islanders are encouraged to reduce CO2 emissions by commuting to work and school by bike, instead of by car. There will be weekly winners and a grand prize winner. All events are free.

**May 2 [Flood Talk Friday](#).** Join RIFMA for a presentation on resiliency technical assistance and funding opportunities for municipalities. Time: 12PM. Free.

**May 2 - 4 [Jane's Walk 2025](#).** Explore Providence's neighborhoods (and Woonsocket) in a global walking festival inspired by urban activist Jane Jacobs. Interactive walks are led by local residents and community activists who get people thinking, talking, and connecting with each other. Free.

**May 5 [Extreme Weather and Lessons for More Resilient Communities](#)** This open session seeks to advance understanding of the characteristics, impacts, and changing nature of current extreme events. Free.

**May 6 [Enhancing Collaboration Among Urban Forest Stakeholders.](#)** An assessment of natural hazard risk perceptions in relation to the services and disservices of city trees. Time: 1PM. Free.

**May 6 [Progress in Form-Based Coding.](#)** Discussion on how zoning in the U.S. has changed, based on an AI-assisted study of form-based zoning nationwide. Time: 12PM. Free. 1 CM.

**May 7 [From Vision to Action: Is Building a Tech Economy the Right Choice for Your Rural Community?](#)** Discover how your rural community can take the first steps toward building a thriving tech economy. Time: 1PM. Free.

**May 8 [The Health Lens: Reimagining the Built Environment for a Changing Climate.](#)** Webinar is designed to prepare environmental and resilience professionals with a foundational understanding of the critical intersection between climate and human health. Time: 9AM. Fee: \$30-\$175.

**May 8 [Navigating Current and Future Freight Challenges.](#)** The freight industry is rapidly evolving, driven by the growth of e-commerce, increasing demands on emergency mobility, and persistent challenges such as truck parking shortages. Time: 1PM. Free.

**May 9 [RI Emerging Planners' Happy Hour](#)** Are you new to the RI planning field? Been at it for a little while, but still consider yourself "emerging" on the scene? Connect with peer planners, socialize, and make new friends! Time: 4:30PM-6:30 PM. Location: Pivotal Brewing Company, 500 Wood Street, Bristol. Free, but please RSVP.

**May 12 [What the World Needs is a Nature-Positive Economy.](#)** Envisions an economy that not only respects planetary boundaries but also actively drives ecological regeneration. Time: 11AM. Free.

**May 13 [Back to Basics: Active Transportation.](#)** Covers key topics like evolving design standards, solutions like protected intersections and continuous sidewalks, and fundamentals like the modal hierarchy. With a focus on real-world case studies. Time: 2PM. Fee: \$79. 1.5 CM.

**May 14 [Exploring AASHTO's Updated Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 5th Edition.](#)** Learn flexible approaches to design bikeways and the roles of the planner, designer, and engineer in determining appropriate bikeway types and design dimensions. Time: 3PM. Free.

**May 15 [Beyond the Curb: The Key Elements to a Successful Main Street Streetscape.](#)** Drawing from real-world examples, dive into the collaborative process of transforming a vision into a thriving, sustainable community space. Time: 11AM. Free. 1 CM.

**May 15 [Economic Benefits of Mountain Biking in the U.S.](#)** Webinar on the economic benefits of mountain biking, potential challenges that outdoor recreation communities face regarding increased visits, and how to mitigate them. Time: 1PM. Free. 1 CM.

**May 15 [2025 RIFMA Conference- Harnessing the Flow of Community: Bridging the Gaps of Social and Physical Infrastructure.](#)** Time: 8AM-4:30PM. Location: URI Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences, 120 Flagg Road, Kingston. Fee: \$40-\$150.

**May 21 [Triple Decker Forever.](#)** This project, hosted by the Providence Preservation Society, celebrates the history of multi-family urban housing. Location: Providence Preservation Society, 24 Meeting Street Providence. Time: 5PM. Fee: \$0-\$20.

**May 22 [Debriefing the First 100 Days: Water Policy & Equity in the New Administration.](#)** Session will include an overview of Executive Orders, appointments of key leadership positions, cuts to funding and federal agencies, and water policy changes. Time: 2PM-3:30PM. Free.

**May 31 [Bike for Bees and Butterflies.](#)** Pedal along the scenic Woonasquatucket River Greenway



and explore several interactive stations hosted by community partners. Location: Goldsmith Street, Johnston. Meet at the fish ladder. Time: 10AM. Free.

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## Grants & Deadlines

**May 7** [Publishing Historical Records in Collaborative Digital Editions](#) from the National Archives to publish online editions of historical records.

**May 23** [State Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\)](#) develops viable communities by providing decent housing, economic opportunities and suitable living environments.

**May 30** [YIMBYtown New Haven](#) call for speakers deadline. YIMBYtown is the biggest national pro-homes conference in the country and will be held in New Haven, CT on September 14 - 16, 2025.

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## Articles of Interest

[Deconstruction & Salvage: When Historic Buildings Come Down, Can the Materials Find New Life?](#)

[Aquidneck Island Prepared to Make Transit Active](#)

[Planning Board Urges Town Council to Nix Series of Zoning Policy Changes](#)

[Once the Site of a 1950s Diner, This Vacant Land is Slated to Become Affordable Housing](#)

[Board Approves Ann & Hope Project; Focus on Community Connections](#)

[Controversial Rezoning Proposal Draws Packed House at Public Meeting](#)

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## RI Statewide Planning Staff

Click [here](#) for staff contact information.

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## Photo Trivia Answer

**West Greenwich - Louttit Library (1936)**

Photo: Wikipedia

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