

## **ELEMENT 611: TRANSPORTATION 2035**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

State Guide Plan Element 611, Transportation 2035 was approved by the State Planning Council on December 13, 2012, and as of that date it updates and replaces Transportation 2025 (adopted in 2004).

The element provides a long-range framework, goals, policies, and recommendations for the movement of both goods and people. It encompasses the highway system, public transit, transportation system management, bicycle travel, pedestrian, intermodal, and regional transportation needs.

There are five basic parts to this element:

#### **Part One Introduction and Background**

The Introduction describes the purpose and scope of the plan and outlines statewide transportation planning in Rhode Island. It also includes a performance assessment of the previous plan Transportation 2025 and outlines federal transportation planning requirements and recommendations.

#### **Part Two Transportation System and Needs Assessment**

This section includes an inventory and description of Rhode Island's transportation infrastructure, modes, and facilities. It also presents four future transportation funding scenarios, Sink, Tread Water, Swim, and Win the Race and describes the expected impacts on infrastructure condition, expansion, and transportation financing. The section also includes a list of transportation planning needs.

#### **Part Three Financing the Transportation System**

Part Three describes how federal and state resources are used to fund Rhode Island's transportation system, discusses problems with the state's transportation financing system, presents possible solutions to state funding shortfalls, and sets transportation funding priorities. It also includes a fiscal constraint analysis that allocates transportation funds through the year 2035.

#### **Part Four Environmental Analysis**

The Environmental Analysis describes Rhode Island's natural resources and discusses ways to mitigate the negative impacts of transportation. It also includes a land use scenario analysis, which is linked to Land Use 2025, an environmental justice analysis, and an air quality analysis that demonstrates Transportation 2035's compliance with the Rhode Island State Implementation Plan (SIP), US EPA's Clean Air Act Amendments, and federal transportation conformity requirements.

#### **Part Five Recommendations**

This section presents recommendations in fourteen topic areas: bicycle, design, economic development, emergency response, environment, equity, finance, highway, intermodal, land use and travel corridors, pedestrian, planning, safety, and transit.

## 2 VISION

Transportation 2035 presents a vision for the future of Rhode Island's transportation system.

*Our common vision recognizes transportation as a core function that threads through other elements of society. Transportation connects the state with the global and regional economies, the home with the workplace, the individual with the community, and all of us with one another. It must equitably benefit all communities, and must be reconciled with quality of life issues as vital as the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the preservation of our natural and historic heritage and beauty of the natural and built environments. It cannot exist independently of these concerns.*

## 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation 2035 includes recommendations in fourteen topic areas; under each topic are an overarching goal, objectives, policies, strategies, and performance measures. The goals are broad statements of desired ends for Rhode Island; objectives, policies, and strategies are intended to move the state towards the goal; and performance measures describe how progress to achievement of the objectives is measured. Transportation 2035's goals are described below.

### Transportation 2035 Goals

- **Bicycle**  
Maintain and expand an integrated statewide network of on-road and off-road bicycle routes to provide a safe means of travel for commuting, recreation, and tourism in order to improve public health, and reduce auto congestion and dependency.
- **Design**  
Strive for excellence in design of transportation projects to enhance safety, security, mobility, environmental stewardship, aesthetic quality, and community livability.
- **Economic Development**  
Support a vigorous economy by facilitating the multi-modal movement of freight and passengers within Rhode Island and the northeast region.
- **Emergency Response**  
Develop transportation and communication systems that serve Rhode Islanders and the region in the event of natural disasters, accidents, and acts of terrorism in a manner that minimizes injury, loss of life, and disruption to the economy; facilitates evacuation of people; and allows emergency response and recovery activities to occur.

- **Environment**  
Recognize, protect and enhance the quality of the state’s environmental resources and the livability of its communities through well-designed transportation projects and effective operation of the transportation system.
- **Equity**  
Ensure that the transportation system equitably serves all Rhode Islanders regardless of race, gender, ethnic origin, income, age, disability, or geographic location.
- **Finance**  
Provide a sustainable financial base for the transportation system that is adequate for supporting needed infrastructure and services with an emphasis on preservation and management of the existing system.
- **Highway**  
Maintain the highway and bridge network in a safe, attractive, and less congested condition to carry passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, government vehicles, and transit vehicles, as well as bicycles and pedestrians. Recognize roadways as vital public spaces that accommodate travel, commerce, community activities, and utility infrastructure.
- **Intermodal**  
Provide convenient intermodal facilities and services offering seamless connections for passengers and freight.
- **Land Use and Travel Corridors**  
Continue to integrate land use and transportation planning using a travel corridor framework and promote responsible development practices in the public and private sectors.
- **Pedestrian**  
Create and maintain safe and attractive walkable communities to encourage more walking trips, enhance transit usage, improve public health, and reduce auto congestion and dependency.
- **Planning**  
Conduct a comprehensive, cooperative and continuing planning process that responds to public interests and concerns, strives to meet the needs of underserved communities, and fosters productive relationships with elected and appointed officials from all levels of government and the private sector.
- **Safety**  
Improve the safety of all transportation modes through education, enforcement, and engineering solutions.
- **Transit**  
Provide a safe, robust, and convenient network of transit and shared ride services with seamless intermodal connections in support of increased employment opportunities, improved environmental quality, and reduced congestion and auto dependency.