

September 2020

The RIGIS Executive Committee

The Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS) Executive Committee provides policy guidance, oversight, and coordination of the collective efforts of organizations in Rhode Island that use GIS technology. It is a subcommittee of the Rhode Island State Planning Council, the State's only metropolitan planning organization (MPO). The RI Division of Statewide Planning (RIDSP) serves as staff support to the Committee, which consists of representatives from other State agencies, quasi-governmental organizations, Rhode Island municipalities, educational institutions, water supply boards, private consulting firms, and land trusts and environmental groups. The Committee is not funded as a separate unit of state government

Historically, the RIGIS Coordinator (or "Supervising Geographic Information System Specialist") at RIDSP provided staff support and acted as a liaison for RIGIS within the state, the northeast region, and nationally. While it is anticipated that the Coordinator position will be filled in the spring of 2021, barring additional changes in policy or budget at the state level, the position has been vacant since October 2015. Other RIDSP staff participate in the work of the Committee and provide support, where possible.

Member and partner organizations also contribute through collaboration with

Task Forces are created and disbanded as needed to support specific initiatives. Currently, the Committee has the following Task Forces/User Groups:

- Municipal Boundaries Task Force
- RIGIS User Group
- Municipal User Group
- Utilities User Group

The Committee holds quarterly meetings that are open to the public and encourages anyone with an interest in GIS to attend. The next meeting is on September 17 at 2PM (see below).

Committee Chairperson Michele Giorgianni, GISP, PMP, a Principal/Senior Project Manager with Applied Geographics, Inc. of Connecticut, says, "My favorite part of being on the Committee is listening to the round table, where each member gives a highlight about the great work they're doing in their own communities and throughout the State. The User Group meetings are always a great learning and networking experience, too. I'm looking forward to having a RIGIS Coordinator back in place and seeing some real progress in statewide (and national) coordination and initiatives, such as the long-overdue and highly-needed Statewide parcel data set."

Vice Chair Lynn Carlson, Manager of the Brown University Environmental and Remote Technologies Lab, reflects on

RIGIS Working Groups, which coordinate data development, adopt technical standards, set distribution policy, promote the use of GIS, share information, and assist users. The Working Groups are aligned with the goals of the *RIGIS Five-Year Strategic Plan*:

- Data Management
- Data Distribution
- Outreach
- Technical Standards
- Education

User Groups are established to give members an opportunity to share knowledge and learn from their peers.

Executive Committee: "I always anticipate the regular interaction with my GIS colleagues throughout the state at our quarterly meetings. Being able to reconnect with my peers, however briefly, leaves me inspired by their work. This amazing technology can be applied to support and improve decisions impacting everything from agriculture to zoning, is very energizing."

For more information about RIGIS or the RIGIS Executive Committee, visit their [website](#) or contact RIDSP staff at Christina.DelageBaza@doa.ri.gov.

Congestion Management Plan



Over the past fifteen months, RIDSP staff and the Congestion Management Task Force, along with consultants Cambridge Systematics and TrafInfo, have developed a new Congestion Management Process/Plan (CMP) for the State of Rhode Island. Federal transportation regulations require that metropolitan areas of 200,000+ people must create

and maintain a CMP. As the sole MPO for the State, RIDSP is responsible for carrying out these responsibilities.

Rhode Island's previous CMP was developed and adopted as part of the *2035 Long-Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP) in 2012; however, it lacked travel time data, which limited its usefulness for identifying locations of congestion and potential mitigation strategies. The new CMP uses travel time data from INRIX to identify:

- Sources and locations of congestion, and causes of recurring and nonrecurring congestion in Rhode Island, including the State's top thirty bottlenecks and top twenty congested corridors;
- Defines congestion management objectives and multimodal performance measures, and potential multimodal congestion management strategies;
- Potential projects already identified in recent plans for freight, transit, and bicycle, as well as in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), that would contribute towards improved congestion management; and
- Defines how the CMP integrates with other planning processes, including the 2040 LRTP: *RI Moving Forward 2040*.

At their August 13, 2020 meeting the RI State Planning Council meeting voted to adopt the CMP. RIDOT Director Peter Alviti said, "This report, when you look at it historically [and] in the context of other reports that exist and previous studies, is heads above the rest of them" and that "it is more data-driven and informed by the data that exists for congestion and transportation." This approach is consistent with RIDSP's recent approach for all plans: RIDSP's Linsey Callaghan adds, "Deriving outcomes from metrics ultimately helps us to solve the most important problems facing us today." The CMP will serve as an appendix to the LRTP, which will be made public in coming months.

In future newsletters, RIDSP will explain how cities and towns can use the CMP to make informed decisions on future transportation projects. Links to both the full plan and executive summary can be found at the Division of Statewide Planning [website](#). Please reach out to Mason.Perrone@doa.ri.gov for questions regarding the CMP.

New Planner Spotlight

One of Rhode Island's newest planners is Talia Jalette, the Senior Planning Clerk for the Town of Hopkinton, RI. She has worked for the Town since December of 2019. About her job, Talia says, "What I like the most is that it gives me the opportunity to learn something new each and every day – not just about the planning process, but about the community at large."



A Richmond, R.I. native, Talia graduated from Chariho Regional High School in 2012 and double-majored in politics and philosophy at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, N.H. She was heavily involved in campaign politics at school, and the Granite State was where she "first fell in love with local government." (Fun fact: she was interviewed for C-SPAN and the show "On the Record"!) She then went on to receive a Master's degree in Public Administration and a certificate in Urban Informatics from Northeastern University.

Hopkinton Town Planner James Lamphere says, "We hired Talia because she possesses the right combination of intelligence, education and attitude that we need. Talia laughs easily and is an overall wonderful colleague to work with. She is a quick learner, has great judgement and goes about her work confidently and effectively."

When not at work, Talia enjoys reading, gardening, crafts, and hiking. Reach Talia at tjalette@hopkintonri.org and welcome her to our planning community!

Brady's Bulletin

Unexpectedly, it's down to the wire for Census 2020. Since we've last spoken, enumeration for the 2020 Census has been cut short by 31 days, pulling back from October 31 to September 30. Rhode Island stands to keep (or lose) a Congressional seat, depending on the outcome of the count (when compared to the count in other states), and there's more than just representation on the line (as if that's not enough!) Over the next decade billions of dollars (yes, that's billions with a "B") will flow into Rhode Island for services such as health care, nutrition, senior services, and even roads and bridges, all apportioned according to formulas that take population counts, as well as specific categories of population, into account. But wait, there's more! Many plans and policies are developed utilizing Census data (even your local Comprehensive Plan): if we don't know who's living in Rhode Island, how can we meet the needs of our population? How's your community doing with the count? Do you need any resources? Check out our [webpage](#) and reach out to [Vin Flood](#) of the Statewide Planning staff with any questions.

Census has taken up a significant chunk of my time over the last 1.5 years, but there are so many phenomenal projects ongoing that the Division is involved in: you'll read about our Congestion Management Plan & Process, and in October you'll see the public hearing notice for the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). We're also at the table to

assist with the Governor's new Mobility Innovation Working Group (next meeting is September 3 on Zoom, let me know if you need the link) and we are continuing to create the foundation for Land Use 2050 (our update to *Land Use 2025*). We continue to be involved in climate change and resilience efforts, review comprehensive plans, learn more from neighboring states and MPOs, assist local communities, and focus on shifting the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to an online platform that is data-driven and transparent. All of these things are now taking place in a world where our teams come face-to-face through Zoom and Microsoft Teams, and where I've decided that the last six months has been the single longest workday of my life, as I try to separate myself from my laptop and my standing desk long enough to take care of myself and allow for personal growth.

The deadlines don't end. The e-mails don't magically evaporate. Staff still needs someone at the tiller, steering steady course and charting the approach. I'm getting a little more philosophical about life as I approach the magic (or is that tragic) 5-0 this month, separated and distanced from people whom I care about, keenly aware of my own mortality and feeling the weight of the world on my shoulders, some days. Other days, I walk to our neighborhood beach to photograph sunrise and find myself watched by a young fox, return home to some locally roasted coffee, end my day at 4 pm, and go ride my horse. Your mileage may vary - so remember to be kind to each other, and kind to yourself. Set a schedule, but don't make it unforgiving. Go for a walk. Bake the cookies. Attend a virtual concert. Give yourself what you need to find a little peace.

I'm also going to remind you that I'm here if you need to reach out: want to chat about work, have a question about planning, or just need someone to talk to for a few minutes, about anything at all? E-mail me at meredith.brady@doa.ri.gov or at home at ladybard@verizon.net, or call/text (401) 368-7601.

Upcoming Meetings

Please check the links to see if meetings have been canceled and/or changed.

[Technical Committee](#)

September meeting- **CANCELED**

[State Planning Council](#)

September 10- 9AM via Zoom

[RIGIS Executive Committee](#)

September 17- 2PM via Zoom

[Transportation Advisory Committee](#)

September 24- 5:30PM via Zoom

All meetings are open to the public. Please click on the links to find out how to attend virtually.

PHOTO TRIVIA

Do you know where in RI this structure is located? See the answer, below!



Virtual Events

September 1 [Planning and Designing Public Spaces for Spatial Justice.](#) Not all public spaces are created equal; transformative planning and urban design begins with addressing historic and current experiences of racism and exclusion. Join the discussion of what that means in practice. Time: 2PM-3:30PM. Free.

September 4 [The Peace Cross Case: US Supreme Court and Local Guidance.](#) In 2012, the American Humanist Association challenged the Peace Cross (a symbol honoring WWI veterans) in court, arguing that a religious symbol on public land violated the First Amendment. Panel discussion of lessons learned. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free.

September 9 [Historic Urban Landscape Framework and Historic Preservation](#) This session will feature presentations from international experts on the Historic Urban Landscape approach and implementation of the protocol in cities around the world. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

September 9 [Last-Mile Delivery Innovations.](#) The rapid growth of e-commerce and package deliveries across the globe is demanding new solutions to meet customers' desire for faster deliveries: this webinar presents last mile innovations, focusing on the cost competitiveness of autonomous, air, and ground delivery vehicles. Time: 2PM.

September 15-16 [2020 AARP Livable Communities Transportation Workshop.](#) This national workshop will explore transportation options that improve health, support vibrant neighborhoods, and connect people to economic, social and civic opportunities in their communities. Time: 1PM-4PM. Free.

September 16 [A National Scan of Bike Share Equity Programs: Best Practices and Lessons Learned.](#) The "National Scan of Bike Share Equity Programs" will help cities navigate the range of actions that have been implemented to make bike share systems more equitable and examine successful strategies. Time: 2PM. Free. 1 CM.

September 22 & 23 [A Framework for Ecosystem Services Projects.](#) This online, blended learning opportunity will provide the foundation and practical skills necessary to begin planning an ecosystem services project. Time: 9/22: 12PM-3PM; 9/23: 11AM-12:30PM.

September 25 [Freight & Land Use Seminar: Session I.](#) Join the RI Division of Statewide Planning and the FHWA for a series of sessions on freight land uses. Planning practitioners will learn through awareness building, peer sharing and identification of actionable strategies to implement. Time: 1PM-3PM. Free. 2 CM.

September 29 [Mobility in the Modern Era: Shared Mobility.](#) This webinar will explore the rapid rise of shared e-scooters, the way they've changed how to get around in cities, and challenges and opportunities. Time: 4PM. Free.

September 29 [Restore America's Estuaries 2020 Summit.](#) This gathering of coastal professionals will be a highly-interactive virtual opportunity to network with colleagues, share lessons learned, and hear from experts on the latest in coastal restoration and management. Registration fee: \$275-\$350.

October 29-30 [SNEAPA @ A Distance](#) SNEAPA 2020 is virtual! The annual SNEAPA Conference will provide high-quality sessions with relevant and useful content for planners, opportunities to network, and venues for interaction. Registration fee: \$25-\$95.

Every Wednesday [Grow Smart RI's "Wednesday Webinars"](#) on historic tax credits, solar siting, housing, unused malls, and more. Time: 10AM. Fee: \$10. CM credits are available.

Anytime [Community Engagement 2020: Re-evaluating How We Collaborate with Communities](#). In the wake of increasing social and economic disruption (and in a pandemic), how do we ensure that community engagement is conducted more inclusively? What have we learned over the last several months? Free and on-demand.

Grant Opportunities

September 10 [Rural Placement Innovation Challenge](#) deadline. Technical assistance for planning to: foster placemaking activities; help enhance broadband access; preserve cultural/historic structures; and support the development of transportation, housing, and recreational spaces. Must directly benefit cities or towns with 50,000 residents or less.

September 14 Deadline for [HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants](#), which support the development of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that focus on directing resources to address three core goals: housing, people and neighborhood.

September 17 [Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Program](#) deadline. The purpose of this US Forest Service program is to encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes identified in State Forest Action Plans.

September 18 [RIDEM Brownfield Grant application](#) deadline. Funds are available for redevelopment/reuse plans that support a positive impact on the community with amenities for public use and community engagement opportunities for designated Environmental Justice (EJ) areas.

September 18 [Van Beuren Foundation grant deadline](#). Aquidneck Island/Newport County are priorities, but proposals from outside this region that make the case for community benefit are welcome in four priority areas: strong starts, healthy lifestyles, community prosperity, and excellence in the commons.

Planning Articles of Interest

[Council approves three-person limit for rentals](#)

[U.S. flood strategy shifts to relocation of entire neighborhoods](#)

[Solar company facing questions after blast shakes nearby homes](#)

[Metacomet development plan continued; ownership change expected](#)

[Salve Regina dorms get over one more hurdle](#)

[The future of the New England lobster industry is anything but guaranteed](#)

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PHOTO TRIVIA ANSWER:

Cogswell Tower, Central Falls (1904)

Photo: Wikipedia