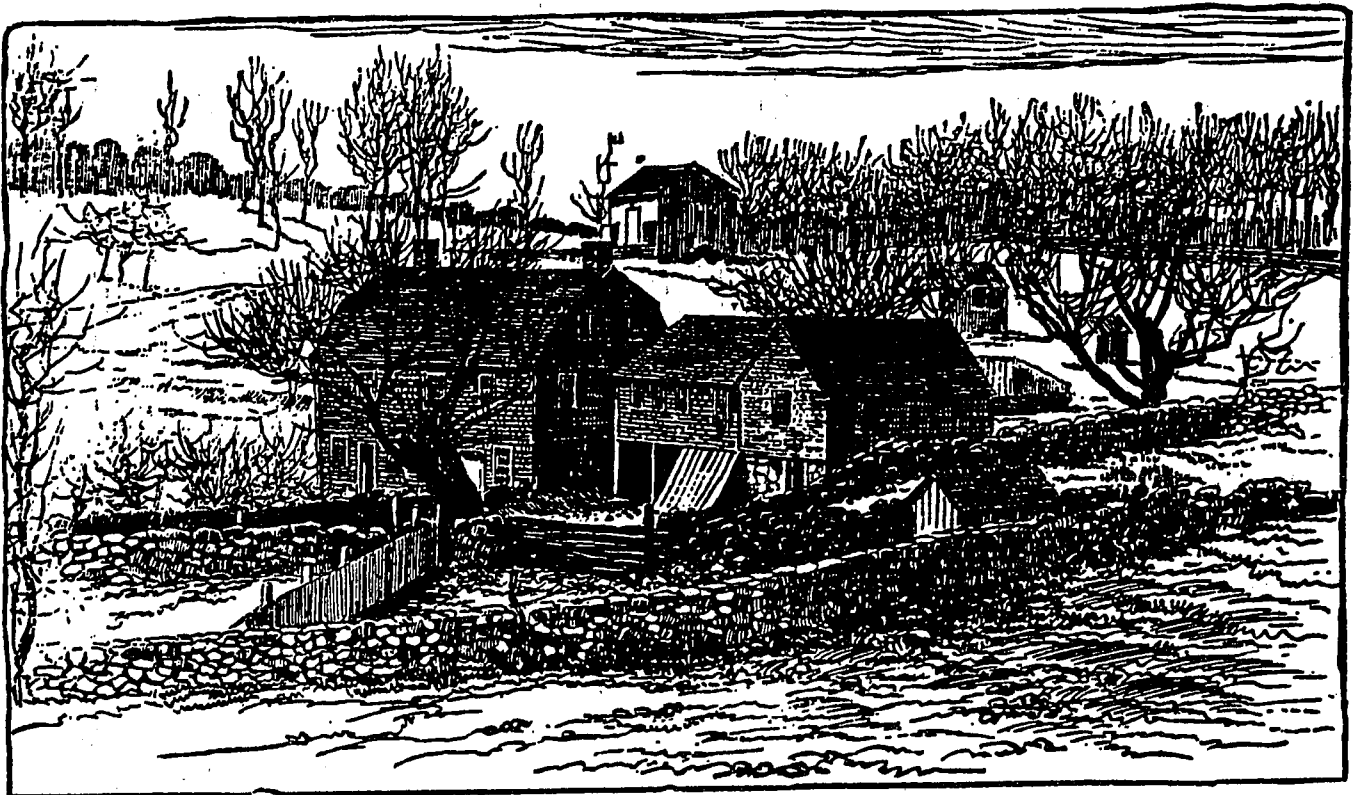


Report Number 89

# Rhode Island State Historical Preservation Plan

State Guide Plan Element 140



JUNE 1996

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission  
and  
State Planning Council

**Report Number 89**

**RHODE ISLAND**

**STATE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION PLAN**

**adopted on June 25, 1996, as  
State Guide Plan Element 140**

**Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission  
150 Benefit Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
and**

**State Planning Council  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908**

## ABSTRACT

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**ABSTRACT:** This plan sets the context for historical preservation in Rhode Island. It explains how information is organized and what progress has been made to date on a number of programs. It describes the planning process; establishes goals, policies, and priorities; and presents strategies for putting the plan into action.

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## PREFACE

This plan was originally prepared by the staff of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (the state historical preservation office) to guide its activities and to meet requirements of the National Park Service. The Commission approved the plan in September 1995.

Subsequently, the Commission provided the plan to the Division of Planning, for adoption as an element of the State Guide Plan. The plan was reviewed by Division staff and the State Planning Council's Technical Committee, before adoption by the Council as element 140 of the State Guide Plan in June 1996. A few revisions were made in this version of the plan.

The plan was written by Pamela Kennedy, Supervising Historic Preservation Specialist, of the Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission. At the Division of Planning, the plan was reviewed by Susan P. Morrison, Chief, Office of Systems Planning, and was produced for publication by Kim A. Gelfuso, Senior Word Processing Typist, and Linda O. Resendes, Senior Clerk Stenographer.

Preparation of the plan was supported by funding from the National Park Service to the Commission, and by state appropriations to both the Commission and the Division. The Division of Planning's work was conducted under Task 0301 of the Work Programs for FY 1996 and FY 1997.

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## PART 140-1 INTRODUCTION

Rhode Island's historic preservation plan is a means of organizing information about all of the state's historic properties. It is also a process for setting historical preservation goals and establishing priorities in consultation with individuals and groups who are concerned about historic preservation. And the plan is an operational document, identifying specific strategies to reach identified goals.

Rhode Island's plan incorporates and responds to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for historical preservation planning:

- Standard I: Preservation planning establishes historic contexts.
- Standard II: Preservation planning uses historic contexts to develop goals and priorities for the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties.
- Standard III: The results of preservation planning are made available for integration into broader planning processes.

The National Park Service requires that approved state historical preservation offices have a state historical preservation plan. In Rhode Island, the Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHP&HC), a state agency, is the state historic preservation office. The RIHP&HC also has other responsibilities for heritage programming, which are not described or addressed here. This document has been prepared to meet the requirements of the National Park Service and the needs of the RIHP&HC.

This plan describes a planning process which is dynamic and continuous, a process of gathering information, evaluating data, setting goals, establishing priorities, consulting with constituents, and preparing operational plans on an annual basis. The plan incorporates by reference a number of different documents, including survey and National Register context statements, a description of the public participation process, and implementation plans, including annual work programs prepared for each federal fiscal year.

## **PART 140-2 THE CONTEXT FOR PRESERVATION**

The preservation of significant historic resources occurs within a variety of contexts. To plan for the future of Rhode Island's historic resources one must know about the state--its lands and waterways; its people and their patterns of work, commerce, travel, and education; and the processes by which decisions concerning public policy on preservation issues are made.

### **2-1 THE PHYSICAL CONTEXT--RHODE ISLAND'S LAND AND WATERWAYS**

Rhode Island is the nation's smallest state, only 1214 square miles, and is located in the southernmost tier of New England. The land areas of Rhode Island surround Narragansett Bay, a long narrow estuary oriented north-south and reaching into the land mass of Rhode Island some 30 miles. Narragansett Bay is the dominant geographic feature of both the eastern half of the state and the low-lying coastal strip of the western half. West of Narragansett Bay, the state's land rises gradually into the low gentle hills of the west and northwest. The state's highest point at Jerimoth Hill is only 800 feet. The coastline of Rhode Island (including the bay, its islands, and the southern shore) is over 400 miles long and has been an overridingly important feature of the state's historical development and will continue to be an important part of its future development.

At the head of Narragansett Bay is the city of Providence, its harbor set at the confluence of the three rivers which drain the northern section of the state. Providence is the state's capital and its industrial, educational, and cultural center. North of Providence to the state's border with Massachusetts are the cities and towns of the Blackstone Valley. Once characterized by hardscrabble farms and later by the development of industry within settlement nodes along the river, the valley's older cities and agricultural matrix are now overlain by suburban development.

On the west side of Narragansett Bay a series of coastal settlements centered on small ports stretches from Providence to Narragansett, again overlain by suburban development. The state's second major river, the Pawtuxet, was (like the Blackstone) the scene of industrial settlements strung along the valley's length.

The western areas of Rhode Island along the border with Connecticut are still the state's most rural regions. Gentle hills, woods, small streams, lakes and ponds characterize this most sparsely settled region of the state. The largest water body here is the Scituate Reservoir, which provides water to the Providence area.

The southern shore of Rhode Island fronts on the Atlantic Ocean and is separated from it by barrier beaches. The southernmost reach of the state's lands is a flat moraine; just north of the moraine are the broad outwash plains of South County. The state's best soils are located here, and this has always been an important agricultural area. The land of this region is interlaced with swamps and wetlands and is drained by the Wood-Pawcatuck River.

Narragansett Bay is framed on the east by a series of long peninsulas whose indented coasts contain small ports at Bristol and Warren. The bay itself is dominated by a series of islands both large and small. The most important is Aquidneck Island, home to the city of Newport, once a major port, later a large military installation, now a major tourist attraction. Conanicut Island is a long narrow stretch of land, oriented north-south in the middle of the bay. Most of the other islands are not inhabited, though many have been fortified to protect the bay. Block Island, located south of Narragansett Bay in Long Island Sound, is an important resort.

## **2-2 THE DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT--THE PEOPLE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Rhode Island's population is growing slowly. In 1990, 1,003,500 people lived in this state, an increase from 1980 of about 6 percent. Though the increase was small by national standards, it was a reversal of the trend of the previous ten years when the state lost a small percentage of its population. The slow rate of growth in the 1980s is likely to continue through the 1990s.

Rhode Island is a very densely populated state, over 900 people per square mile. This average masks the very uneven distribution of the state's population. The greatest concentrations of Rhode Islanders are in the older core cities of Providence (with just over 150,000 people), Pawtucket, and Woonsocket and in the early suburban areas, especially Warwick and Cranston.

Rhode Island's population is growing most quickly in its smallest towns. Charlestown, New Shoreham, and Richmond, for example, had growth rates over 30 percent between 1980 and 1990. This pattern is likely to continue as South County and the western hill towns continue to exhibit an expanding population.

About 90 percent of Rhode Islanders are Caucasian; about 4 percent are African-Americans; about 0.5 percent are Native Americans. Rhode Islanders are diverse in their national ancestries, a legacy of the successive waves of immigrants who have historically made the state their home; the state has large groups of people whose ancestral origins are in Ireland, Italy, France and French Canada, England, Portugal, Germany, Poland, and southeast Asian nations, such as Viet Nam and Cambodia. An increasing number of Rhode Islanders can claim Hispanic origins, as immigration from South American and Caribbean locations becomes an important pattern. A further legacy of immigration to Rhode Island is the historic importance of the Roman Catholic (and other national Catholic) churches--Rhode Island is the most Catholic state in the nation; well over half of all Rhode Islanders claim an affiliation with the church.

Rhode Islanders are on average somewhat older than Americans in general. In 1990, 15 percent of the population was 65 and older; this group of Rhode Islanders is likely to increase in size in the next ten years. On average, Rhode Islanders are neither poorer nor richer than Americans as a whole; their per capita income is roughly equal to the national figure, though there are disparities within the state. The average residents of Providence, for example, have a lower income than residents of many suburban towns.

A little more than half of all Rhode Islanders own their own homes, though this aggregate figure again hides differences among communities. In Barrington, 9 out of 10 residents live in houses they own; in Providence about 4 out of 10; in Central Falls about 2 out of 10.

Historically, large numbers of Rhode Islanders have made their living in manufacturing. The state was one of the earliest and most intensively industrialized. Since the early twentieth century, manufacturing has been a stagnating rather than expanding component of the economy. While many Rhode Islanders work in the manufacture of goods (especially metals, machinery, jewelry, textiles, and chemicals), their numbers are not likely to expand greatly in the next few years. Three to four times as many Rhode Islanders make their living in non-manufacturing sectors such as service industries, trade, construction, financial industries (as the state has become a regional banking center), transportation, and public service.

Once located almost exclusively in urban or riverfront sites, Rhode Island's industry has become in last four decades far more suburbanized as many towns have developed industrial parks to attract manufacturers.

Less than one percent of Rhode Islanders farm for a living, but these few farmers have a disproportionate impact on the state's landscape. Nursery stock, fuelwood, and turf are the state's principal agricultural products; there are some dairy farms, orchards, apiaries, and truck farms. The principal field crop is potatoes. A small commercial fishing fleet still operates; most boats put in at Point Judith.

Commercial centers in Rhode Island have traditionally been located in the downtowns of older core cities, such as Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket. In the last few decades, commerce has become more suburbanized as major shopping malls have been constructed in the state (two in Warwick, one in Lincoln) and in areas of Massachusetts near the border with Rhode Island.

Rhode Islanders employ an elaborate transportation system, which has an important impact on planning for the future. Major highways and bridges connect all areas of the state. I-95 is the major north-south route for automobiles, passing from the southwest section of the state through Providence and into Massachusetts. It is roughly paralleled in its southern reach by US-1. I-195 is a major east-west route, moving traffic from eastern Massachusetts into Providence; its extension through western Rhode Island into Connecticut is US-6. RI-138 carries east-west traffic across southern Rhode Island from Newport, across the bay, and across South County. I-295 serves as a ring road around Providence. This system of roads assures that daily commuting between any two points in the state is possible and that transportation constraints on the outer limits of residential development have been virtually removed.

Railroad passenger and freight service connects Rhode Islanders and their goods to out-of-state destinations via Amtrak, the MBTA, and the Providence and Worcester Railroad. The major passenger stops are in Providence and Kingston. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority provides commuter bus service; a private carrier provides interstate bus service from a

terminal in Providence. Air service is located at the state's Green Airport in Warwick and at several smaller state airports.

Rhode Island's historic ports, once a key to the state's industrial development, no longer dominate the transport network. The great port of Providence is moribund; it now ships only a small fraction of the goods which once passed through, mainly petroleum and scrap metal. The state's smaller ports--Newport, East Greenwich, Pawtuxet, Bristol, Wickford--have become yacht harbors.

Rhode Island has a variety of educational institutions which have an important impact on its future. The state's university is located in rural South County and is a major employer and development determinant in that region. Rhode Island College is located in Providence. The two branches of the state's community college are located on suburban campuses in Lincoln and Warwick. The state also operates a system of vocational-technical schools.

Providence is the site of four major private colleges and universities, institutions which have important roles to play, especially as property owners. There are two other suburban college campuses of note: Roger Williams University in Bristol and Bryant College in Smithfield. Newport is the home of Salve Regina University.

Elementary and secondary education are carried out by local school districts; a parallel system of parochial schools educates about 10 percent of the state's pupils.

Among adult Rhode Islanders, about 70 percent have completed high school and about 20 percent have completed college. But, as with other such statistics, the variations among communities are striking: in East Greenwich over 80 percent of residents are high school graduates, in Richmond about 70 percent, and in Woonsocket about 50 percent.

### **2-3 THE GOVERNMENTAL CONTEXT--MAKING PUBLIC POLICY DECISIONS ABOUT PRESERVATION IN RHODE ISLAND**

Rhode Island's lawmaking body is the General Assembly, which has a 50-member Senate and 100-member House of Representatives. Senators and representatives are elected from districts created for this purpose. Rhode Islanders elect five general officers, chief among them the governor who is the state government's executive officer.

State government is divided by function and area of concern into departments managed by directors who are appointed by the governor. Many of these state departments have important roles in preservation planning, both directly as property owners and as funding or licensing agencies for others' actions.

Rhode Island's public debt is likely to be a significant factor in its public policy-making. Whether measured as debt per capita or as a percentage of personal income, Rhode Island ranks

among the nation's five most indebted states, suggesting that the state's voters may be reluctant to finance major preservation programs or projects in the near future with the sale of bonds.

The RIHP&HC is the state's agency for historic preservation. The RIHP&HC operates both federal and state programs related to historic preservation and reviews actions by federal and state agencies which may have an impact on historic resources. The RIHP&HC also has responsibilities for heritage programming not directly related to historical preservation.

Every state agency has the potential to play an important role in preservation decision-making, but four agencies are consistently involved in preservation decisions. The Division of Planning in the Department of Administration serves as the staff for the State Planning Council; administers the Intergovernmental Review Process; and assists communities in meeting their obligations for comprehensive planning. The Department of Environmental Management is the manager of many of Rhode Island's most important historic sites, buildings, and landscapes; is the funding source for the state's programs for public parks and open space; is the project planning agency in the state for all issues associated with outdoor recreation; and administers the Fresh Water Wetlands Act. The Department of Transportation's responsibilities for road work and transportation project planning have impacts on historic resources. The Coastal Resources Management Council regulates development in the coastal zone.

The land area of the state is divided into 39 cities and towns. While Rhode Island is divided into 5 counties, these are administrative devices only; only the court system is organized by county; there is no unincorporated land in Rhode Island.

The forms of local government vary among Rhode Island communities. In general, cities have a mayor as the executive and a council which serves as the legislative body. About two-thirds of the towns have a manager/administrator. In eight smaller towns, the executive and legislative functions are combined in a council.

Among their several functions Rhode Island communities are required to plan for their future development. State statute mandates that each community prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan which outlines the intent of its citizens and government; among the prescribed elements of the comprehensive plan is a requirement that each community must address its program for the protection of historic resources. Many Rhode Island communities have professional planning staffs.

Actions of city and town government which may have an impact on historic resources may be reviewed by the RIHP&HC. State statute allows Rhode Island communities to zone for historic resources and to require the review of a local historic district commission before alterations or demolitions take place on historic resources. About one-third of Rhode Island's communities use this mechanism.

With a few exceptions, governmental functions are not usually regionalized in Rhode Island. From a preservation perspective, the most important regional agency is the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission, a federal agency that provides funding

and planning assistance to seventeen communities in northern Rhode Island and central Massachusetts.

## **2-4 THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT--THE RIHP&HC'S PARTNERS IN PRESERVATION**

There are more than 100 historical and preservation organizations in Rhode Island, with an estimated total membership of 25,000. Some of these organizations are effective local advocates for historic preservation; they make use of information and technical assistance from the RIHP&HC and in turn distribute that information through their programs.

Among historical and preservation organizations are a handful characterized by large professional staffs, substantial property ownership, and sophisticated programming, such as the Rhode Island Historical Society, the Newport Historical Society, the Providence Preservation Society, the Preservation Society of Newport County, and the Heritage Trust of Rhode Island. The greater number of historical and preservation organizations are small associations, administered by volunteers, often devoted to the history and artifacts associated with a single community, and sometimes serving as stewards and interpreters of an important property in their town. Rhode Island's historical societies are organized into the League of Rhode Island Historical Societies.

Local historic district commissions act together through the Rhode Island Alliance of Historic District Commissions, which shares with the RIHP&HC the administration of an annual conference and training workshops.

Historical preservation as an academic discipline is taught at Roger Williams University, whose undergraduate students perform internships at many of the state's preservation organizations. The university opens its library of historical preservation materials to all Rhode Islanders and thus provides an important resource to the state's preservation community.

## **2-5 WHAT TO PRESERVE--AND WHY**

Interest in and commitment to the preservation of historic resources stem from a belief that the quality of the environment--both natural and man-made--has a direct impact on the quality of each individual's life. It is as vital to preserve the important elements of Rhode Island's man-made environment as it is to conserve and protect the quality of our air and water.

Well-preserved physical evidence of a community's past helps to give each resident and the community as a whole a sense of its location in time and space. Surrounded as we are by evidence of those who have lived in our community in the past--their houses, churches, factories--we gain a sense of ourselves existing along a continuous line of human occupation.



Each Rhode Island community is unique visually and historically, and each has elements of its past that are well worth keeping. The present form of our communities derives from the numerous decisions made by those who lived here in the past--where to live, how to build, how to support families, where and how to worship and to educate children. The evidence of each of these individual decisions is still present in many ways and can remain for our pleasure and edification and for those who come after us, if steps are taken to preserve this heritage.

Too often discussion about how best to use land and buildings fails to account for the pleasure and education of living in a beautiful and historic community, because such values are hard to quantify. Even by quantifiable standards, however, historical preservation is an eminently practical planning tool. By keeping and using buildings constructed by previous generations, the natural resources and materials used in construction are conserved, and buildings which exhibit levels of skill and craftsmanship that are not affordable today are kept in productive use. Preserving and using older buildings helps to preserve open space and helps to sustain existing communities.

Industries important to Rhode Island's economic future rely on the presence of historic communities and buildings. Companies relocating to Rhode Island will look for a quality of life that includes historic neighborhoods and beautiful communities. The tourism industry relies heavily on the existence here of historic sites as attractions. State spending on historical preservation generates jobs, wages, and tax revenues.

## **PART 140-3 ORGANIZING INFORMATION ABOUT RHODE ISLAND'S HISTORIC RESOURCES**

### **3-1 CONTEXT DEFINITION**

Fifty-seven contexts have been established to organize information about the historic resources which embody Rhode Island's 12,500 years of history. Prior to 5,000 B.P. a single context has been established: the Paleo-Indian/Early-Middle Archaic context. For the period between 5,000 B.P. and the settlement of Providence in 1636, five contexts have been identified; they reflect general patterns of Indian land use: the islands, the salt ponds region, the bay coastal area, the near interior, and the upland interior.

In general, the spatial component of contexts prior to European contact is based upon ecological attributes of Indian land use, a diversified adaptation which included the use of coastal as well as interior areas. These areas can be aggregated to form the whole composite of the Indian land use system or considered separately to focus on specific problems.

The salt pond and island contexts have been analyzed using the multiple-property National Register nomination format.

The contexts dealing with the period after 1636 include one for historic shipwrecks and fifty which represent Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns, together with particular neighborhoods in Newport, Providence, Cranston, and Warwick. Rhode Island's development over the last 350 years can be largely understood in terms of community history. Towns were the early organizing unit for land allotment and settlement, political action, and through the influence of the early highway network and seaport development, were the basic economic unit as well. Each community is studied with an awareness of broader regional and national events and trends whose effects varied locally in timing and impact. While each context focuses on a single community, regional and statewide issues can be studied by aggregating several contexts. Using this approach, the RIHP&HC evaluates the significance of properties within a local context without losing the ability to also appreciate the broader significance of some properties.

Each of the fifty above-ground contexts has been analyzed and published as reports on the surveys of the state's communities. A list of contexts is appended to this plan.

### **3-2 PROPERTY TYPES**

Within each above-ground context, resources are classified by property type. All historic properties may be identified as one of twenty-two types. A list of property types is appended to this plan. These property types are used in the evaluation and registration activities of the RIHP&HC. Property types are defined broadly but are intended to be hierarchical and divisible; the types are meant to be broken down into sub-types as needed for evaluation.

Property types may be studied within a single context or, if convenient, contexts may be aggregated to allow for consideration of a property type across the spatial limitations of context definition, either state-wide or regional. It is not expected that all property types will eventually be described or evaluated; they will be used as needed.

At present, property type descriptions and statements of significance have been developed for public elementary schools (a sub-type of educational buildings; in Middletown only); Roman Catholic parish churches (a sub-type of religious buildings; in Providence); lighthouses (a sub-type of marine resources; statewide); single-family houses (a sub-type of houses; statewide); villages (in Foster only); highway bridges (a sub-type of transportation resources; statewide); and sewage treatment facilities (a sub-type of government resources; in Providence only). The analysis of these property types uses National Register formats. A list of property types is appended to this plan.

## **PART 140-4 THE GOAL**

The RIHP&HC's fundamental goal is to identify, locate, and evaluate all of Rhode Island's historic properties through survey and to assist the preservation and rehabilitation of properties which the survey has found to be significant.

**RHODE ISLAND WILL IDENTIFY, LOCATE, AND EVALUATE ALL OF THE STATE'S HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND WILL ASSIST IN THE PRESERVATION OF PROPERTIES WHICH ARE SIGNIFICANT IN THE STATE'S HISTORY.**

Annual priorities are based on statewide preservation needs, on the importance of the historical resources in individual localities and the threats to them, the concerns of the public, and the availability of funding.

As part of the survey and planning process, specific historic preservation recommendations may be established for each context. These recommendations, contained in each survey report, may be limited to a list of properties which should be studied further for nomination to the National Register but sometimes include other local preservation needs also. The surveys provide a well researched and professionally evaluated basis for making historical preservation decisions as new issues arise. The RIHP&HC's intentions for each context (when they extend beyond the identification of potential National Register-eligible properties) are considered in relation to the goals established by each community for its own historic resources in its comprehensive plan.

The RIHP&HC's fundamental goal is based on the principle stated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards: "Properties should be preserved in place, if possible, through affirmative treatments like rehabilitation or passive treatments such as avoidance."

The RIHP&HC has established priorities for each stage of the preservation process, as follows.

### **4-1 IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION**

Survey work is conducted in accordance with National Park Service and RIHP&HC standards to a level sufficient to define contexts and to evaluate properties which are eligible for listing on the National Register.

The survey of above-ground properties is complete in that every structure visible from a public right-of way in the state has been evaluated on a preliminary basis for its ability to meet the registration criteria. Some classes of above-ground properties may require additional survey to establish significance, especially those whose significance may transcend the geographical limits of community contexts or those whose significance derives from new or improved

understanding of historical developments. Further, specific identification needs are described for some contexts.

Archaeological sites from the historic period are identified and located to a lesser extent and are an important priority. Indian land use contexts which are under-surveyed include the pre-5000 B.P. context, the near interior context, and the upland interior context.

## **4-2 EVALUATION**

Priorities for evaluation and registration are provided in each historic context. Individual properties and districts (and sometimes classes of properties) are recommended for further study and registration.

For community contexts, priority is given to research questions identified in the context statement (which may include both property significance and relationship to broader planning concerns, such as historic district zoning); the concerns of certified local governments; the goals and priorities established by communities and adopted as part of the comprehensive planning process; the concerns of federal and state agencies and of the public; the existence of threats which may be addressed through National Register listing; and the potential for affirmative preservation strategies which may result from National Register listing.

For archaeological sites from the historic period, priority is given to appropriate evaluation rather than registration. It is anticipated that an evaluative context will be established which will allow integration of historic archaeological sites into the community contexts and will provide for a sufficient level of evaluation to determine whether sites are eligible for listing.

## **4-3 TREATMENT**

Rhode Island's treatment priority is to preserve all significant historic properties in place and to encourage their restoration or appropriate rehabilitation if needed. The full range of treatment options is brought to bear as a situation warrants.

The key to Rhode Island's approach is the ability to determine at an early stage which properties are worthy of preservation. Because the state survey is well advanced, it is possible to identify those above-ground properties which have historical interest (about 50,000). Of these, about 20,000 are listed on or known to be eligible for the National Register. Thus, the RIHP&HC is able to concentrate treatment decision on known resources; and other agents, both public and private, are able to identify properties which require special consideration because they are historic.

More specific priorities for protecting properties are provided within each historic context. And each Rhode Island community defines treatment strategies for its historic resources within its comprehensive plan. Like the RIHP&HC, communities are able to concentrate their

treatment strategies on properties of known significance which are already located, evaluated, described, and (often) registered. Easements, tax incentives, zoning, and education are important strategies for many communities.

For archaeological sites Rhode Island's preferred treatment is avoidance; data recovery is sometimes used as a last resort when avoidance is not possible. In general, however, the cost of data recovery and the irreversible damage to historical resources that recovery necessarily entails suggest that avoidance should be preferred. Further, in some property types such as burial places ethical and legal considerations require avoidance.

## **PART 140-5 PRESERVATION PROGRESS IN RHODE ISLAND**

Since 1967, when the State of Rhode Island created its state agency for historical preservation, substantial progress has been made by Rhode Islanders in identifying and preserving their historic places. Since 1989 when Rhode Island last revised its state historic preservation plan, the RIHP&HC has accomplished the finite tasks identified in the plan and has made progress toward its continuing priorities.

### **5-1 IDENTIFYING RHODE ISLAND'S HISTORIC PLACES**

A preservation program must begin with awareness and understanding of the state's historic places. The first mission of the RIHP&HC has been to complete a statewide survey of Rhode Island's historic properties and to evaluate their significance.

The RIHP&HC survey is organized by community and neighborhood. The professional staff of the RIHP&HC, working closely with local officials and organizations, researched community development through maps and records and examined all of the visible buildings in each community. Properties which have historical interest, about 50,000, were photographed and described.

The RIHP&HC has published its survey findings in a series of reports which include a concise history of the community, an inventory of places of historical interest, and recommendations for the future of these resources.

The RIHP&HC will continue to add information to its statewide survey (historic landscapes and sculptures are now being surveyed), but every community in the state has now been surveyed. The RIHP&HC published its final community survey in 1995.

### **5-2 LISTING PROPERTIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER**

More than 12,500 properties have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, most of them included in 136 historic districts. About 7,000 more properties are eligible for registration. The large number of Rhode Island properties in the National Register documents our state's rich and widespread architectural, historical, and archaeological heritage. All of the state's National Register properties are also listed on the State Register. National Register properties are located in every Rhode Island community. Every town and city in the state has at least one registered historic district, often many more.

National Register listing protects these important resources from damage by government-funded projects and makes these places eligible for federal and state assistance programs.

### **5-3 REVIEWING THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT PROJECTS**

The RIHP&HC reviews all federal and federally-funded or federally-licensed projects to determine whether they will harm a resource which is on or eligible for the National Register. The RIHP&HC also reviews state projects for their impact. Commission staff work with federal and state agencies to help insure that the damage resulting from government projects is avoided or lessened.

Since its creation the RIHP&HC has reviewed more than 20,000 projects, large and small, to insure that impacts on historic places are minimized. The RIHP&HC has established close working relationships with community governments, state agencies, and federal agencies to insure that consideration for the protection of historic resources is incorporated into the early planning process for government projects.

### **5-4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Over 2,000 significant archaeological sites, spanning 10,000 years of history, are located throughout Rhode Island; many historic shipwrecks lie beneath Narragansett Bay. Some of these sites are above-ground and visible; many more are below-ground. The identification, study, evaluation, and protection of these sites is an important part of the Rhode Island program.

The RIHP&HC has funded archaeological studies throughout the state. Many sites have been located along the coastline where sources of food and other resources have been readily available for 5,000 years. Having located so many sites, RIHP&HC archaeologists can predict the likelihood that a given area contains archaeological sites. If government-funded or licensed construction is planned in an area which probably contains sites, then excavations can be performed to confirm the location and significance of the sites. Information about archaeological sites is recorded in a computerized database at the RIHP&HC and is made available to planners and developers as they need it. Ordinarily, locator information about sites is not published or provided, except where there is a need to know.

The RIHP&HC also monitors archaeological exploration of state-owned land and water. Artifacts recovered during excavation are stored and cared for under the supervision of the RIHP&HC.

### **5-5 PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PRESERVATION PROJECTS**

#### **5-5-1 Grants**

In the last 25 years, the RIHP&HC has awarded 300 restoration grants totalling \$7.1 million. The grants have made to repair and restore the places which are the heart of Rhode Island communities--arts centers, parks, schools, city and town halls, libraries, and theaters--and to the historic places which draw visitors to our state.



Federal funds administered by the RIHP&HC provided most of the government underwriting for restoration in Rhode Island in the 1970s and early 1980s. Federal funds allocated to restoration projects in Rhode Island total more than \$4.3 million.

When federal funding for preservation projects was curtailed after 1983, Rhode Island responded on a state level. Since 1987 Rhode Island state government has authorized more than \$300,000 in legislative grants for the state's community landmarks. In 1988, Rhode Island voters approved a bond issue which provided \$2.5 million to restore state-owned historic places and to purchase and restore Linden Place in Bristol, one of the state's most important houses.

The need for grants for preservation work has always been greater than the funds allocated. This is even more true now than in the past--in 1990, the RIHP&HC documented \$40 million in needed restoration work on public historic buildings.

### **5-5-2 Tax Credits**

The RIHP&HC administers federal tax credits for substantial certified rehabilitations of historic buildings which are income-producing. Assisted by these tax credits, private investors have undertaken over 250 projects worth over \$200 million. In addition to preserving these buildings, these projects create jobs, provide needed housing (1,086 units to date), revitalize our main streets and older neighborhoods, and develop properties for office and commercial use.

In 1989, Rhode Island instituted a state income tax credit to help homeowners with the costs of maintaining their historic houses. So far, a few dozen owner-occupants have claimed this credit, which is administered by the RIHP&HC.

### **5-5-3 Loans**

The RIHP&HC administers the Historic Preservation Loan Fund, which provides low-interest loans to save and restore historic buildings. This is a revolving fund; as loans are repaid, additional projects are funded. Loans have been made in many Rhode Island communities, both to property owners and to communities and preservation organizations which, in turn, lend to property owners.

## **5-6 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

Many Rhode Islanders are interested in the historic places they own and live near and in ways to restore and protect them. Over the years, RIHP&HC staff members have made hundreds of visits to communities throughout the state, presenting lectures and leading tours which highlight historic resources. From time to time, RIHP&HC staff present workshops on special topics such as historic district zoning, lead abatement, and accessibility issues.

Each year the RIHP&HC sponsors, with the Rhode Island Alliance of Historic District Commissions and local communities, the state's annual preservation conference. Each April several hundred preservation leaders gather for a full day of workshops, panel discussions, networking, and tours.

The RIHP&HC's Preservation Library is a special collection of materials about many preservation issues, designed to assist homeowners who want help in planning and carrying out the maintenance and repair of their houses. The Preservation Library is now located in 22 libraries and planning offices around the state.

The RIHP&HC's most direct and effective educational effort is its longstanding commitment to answering individual preservation questions, one by one. Commission staff meet and talk daily with developers, property owners, and public officials, to provide expert advice and to assist in planning preservation projects.

## **5-7 SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRESERVATION EFFORTS**

### **5-7-1 Community Preservation Programs**

Each community in Rhode Island is required by state statute to plan for its future by developing, writing, and adopting a comprehensive plan. These plans express a community's civic goals and outline the strategies a community has identified to reach those goals. Included in each of these plans is the community's plan for the future of its historic resources.

Many of these community preservation plans were developed with the participation and advice of RIHP&HC staff members. Many of the plans use published survey reports as a starting point for planning.

The plans are as various as Rhode Island communities, but each addresses at least minimally a number of preservation issues identified, interpreted, monitored, and reviewed by the RIHP&HC. Some communities have gone far beyond the minimum requirements and have designed community preservation programs which represent a very high level of achievement and which will be effective agents for preservation in their future. Others have designed programs which, while not so ambitious, are suitable for the community's level of interest, awareness, and abilities to participate in preservation programs. Each community's preservation plan is discussed in greater detail in its comprehensive plan; they are also summarized and evaluated by the RIHP&HC.

Rhode Island's communities have also adopted or amended their zoning ordinances to insure that they are compatible with new state zoning enabling legislation and with adopted and approved plans. The RIHP&HC will assist some communities in this process and will monitor progress across the state.

## **5-7-2 Certified Local Governments**

One of the most effective steps a community can take to protect its historic character is to establish local historic district zoning. About one-third of Rhode Island's communities have adopted this protective mechanism. Many other communities will study its efficacy in the next few years, as their comprehensive plans identify historic district zoning for consideration and evaluation.

Under the certified local governments program, the RIHP&HC supports this local commitment to preservation with grants and technical assistance. Communities are certified when they have adopted historic district zoning and created a local commission with authority to review exterior changes to buildings within an identified zone. In the past, CLGs have used RIHP&HC grants to create public education materials, such as brochures and walking tours; to underwrite the cost of National Register nominations; to prepare plans; and to address specific local preservation needs. Each CLG identifies its own priorities; the RIHP&HC gives priority to survey and registration activities, educational and planning programs, and to the community's own priorities.

In addition to grants, the RIHP&HC provides technical assistance and training to CLGs. This assistance is often ad hoc and as needed, but the RIHP&HC also operates a formal training program for local historic district commissioners. Called CORE, this training program is a three-day course which covers technical, design, legal, and communication issues.

## **PART 140-6 POLICIES**

The opportunities for historical preservation to improve the quality of life for all Rhode Islanders are manifold--and each opportunity represents a challenge to Rhode Island's preservationists and an objective toward which the RIHP&HC will work.

The policies listed below will materially advance Rhode Island toward its goal of identifying and evaluating all of the state's historic properties and achieving their preservation through appropriate treatment.

### ***\*Identification and Location***

1. Continue surveys to provide appropriate context for classes of historic properties whose significance is likely to transcend town/city boundaries.
2. Emphasize survey of archaeological sites which date from the period of contact.
3. Emphasize survey of archaeological sites from the pre-5000 B.P. context, the near interior context, and the upland interior context.

### ***\*Evaluation and Registration***

4. Continue to register eligible properties giving highest priority to those whose registration will assist in the development of appropriate planning tools (such as historic district zoning); those identified by certified local governments as priorities; those identified in local community plans as high priority candidates; those identified by federal and state agencies and other publics; and those for which a particular threat may be addressed by National Register listing.
5. Register historic archaeological sites when appropriate but give priority to evaluation rather than registration.

### ***\*Treatment***

6. Encourage and assist appropriate restoration and rehabilitation if needed for above-ground historic properties.
7. Encourage and assist avoidance as the preferred treatment for underground historic properties.

### ***\*City/Town Government***

8. Insure that historical preservation is integrated into local planning processes, through the mechanisms of comprehensive plans and (where appropriate) zoning ordinances.

9. Insure that each community's plans respond to the character and number of historic resources in the community and to the threats to historic resources.

10. Insure that elected and local officials (including historic district commissioners) and municipal planners have sufficient technical assistance in historical preservation issues to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

***\*State and Federal Agencies***

11. Review actions of federal and state agencies to insure that potential adverse effects of their actions on historic resources are minimized.

***\*Private Property Owners***

12. Assist private property owners in the appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation of their historic resources by developing materials which acquaint them with existing financial and protective mechanisms; by developing programs of technical assistance; and by developing materials which increase recognition of historic resources.

***\*Historic Land Areas***

13. Insure that Rhode Islanders have sufficient information available about their designed and agricultural landscapes to make effective decisions about their protection and to develop and promote appropriate strategies for the protection of historic land areas.

***\*Tourism***

14. Assist state and local officials in the promotion of historic sites as tourist destinations.

15. Assist stewards of historic sites to develop strategies which will increase the viability of their sites as destinations.

***\*Housing***

16. Assist state and local housing agencies (including community development corporations) in the use of historical preservation tax credits.

***\*Accessibility***

17. Assist owners of historic buildings in meeting their obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act to insure that historic properties enrich the lives of all Rhode Islanders, including those with auditory, mobility, and visual disabilities, and to insure that the historic character of buildings is retained as they are made accessible to all.

***\*Dangerous Building Materials***

18. Assist Rhode Island's property owners, state agencies, and communities with technical information about lead paint, asbestos, radon, and toxic wastes to assure that appropriate treatments for these dangerous substances do not unnecessarily threaten the integrity of historic resources and to assure the safety of those who use and live in the state's historic buildings.

***\*Natural Disasters***

19. Assist state and federal disaster management agencies in planning for response to a natural disaster which has a major impact on historic resources.

***\*Historical Preservation Education***

20. Provide public education materials and programming which meets the needs of Rhode Islanders for information about their resources and protection mechanisms.

## **PART 140-7 ASSIGNING PRIORITY TO PRESERVATION STRATEGIES**

The threats to historic resources identified above and the priorities established by the RIHP&HC to respond to these threats have been identified with a number of sources.

The agency's general principles are long-standing and have a firm basis in knowledge about Rhode Island's resources, in our understanding of the processes of decision-making about preservation in Rhode Island, and in the understanding and perception of the various preservation constituencies in our state. These general priorities have informed the actions and plans of the RIHP&HC for twenty-five years and have proven their value as guides for action. These principles have provided the basis for making major decisions regarding RIHP&HC's overall program organization, emphasis, scheduling, and allocation of resources. The principles have been a consistent guide to action and their application to the program as a whole has accounted for much of Rhode Island's progress in preservation over the last two decades.

The goal established for the state preservation program is necessarily very general. More specific planning recommendations are found in each of the contexts and, while the overall programmatic principles are vital, it is these specific recommendations which have special importance. Despite the state's small size the preservation movement in Rhode Island is an intensely particularized and localized effort. One of the strengths of the state's preservation program in the past has been its ability to match the development of the professionally staffed central office with the development of myriad efforts by Rhode Islanders in every community to save particular buildings and sites and to create protective mechanisms for historic resources in their community government. This partnership between the RIHP&HC and its staff, guided by sound preservation principles, and Rhode Islanders in their communities, guided by their appreciation of the particular character and quality of the places in which they live, is a substantial asset which should be protected. The operation of this partnership is made manifest in the application of our general policies to the particular needs and concerns of community preservationists.

Within the contexts, the plan contains hundreds of specific planning recommendations. New information is incorporated into these contexts each year as the information is received, and each year the need to revise individual contexts is evaluated in light of new information. Priorities for identification, evaluation, registration, and protection for resources within each context are continually updated to reflect progress toward achieving previously defined goals and to reflect changes in needs and opportunities.

Annually, as the RIHP&HC prepares each year's work program and task list, these goals are re-evaluated and updated. Each year's annual work program is part of this plan. The annual work program is a public document, submitted each year to the Statewide Planning Program's clearinghouse for public review and comment. The work program is summarized and widely distributed for comment and proposed alteration.

In addition to the process of continuous updating and annual re-evaluation, each context is reviewed by RIHP&HC staff at least once every five years. The review may include revision of the context statement and the planning goals or may be limited to the identifying explicitly the need for such revisions. On occasion there is the opportunity for an even broader re-evaluation of the goals and planning recommendations derived from each of the contexts. If the developmental or planning context shifts for a community, a region, or the state as a whole, the RIHP&HC may undertake a reassessment of its goals. For example, a revision in state statute in 1988 which mandated that every Rhode Island community address the future of cultural resources in a comprehensive plan suggested that an evaluation of each context would be useful to the RIHP&HC and to communities. The explicit review and summary of each context which was prepared helped to insure that the technical assistance offered by the RIHP&HC to communities was soundly based. Unforeseen circumstance may arise in the next five years which will suggest that the RIHP&HC may need to conduct such a review once more.

### *An Additional Priority*

Among those asked to assist the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission in identifying threats, assigning goals, and designing strategies for the years ahead were Rhode Islanders who have devoted care, attention, and energy to the historic resources of their communities--owners of historic places, members of historic district commissions, members of historical and preservation societies, community planners, board members and officers of organizations which own historic sites.

When queried with open-ended questions (such as "what is the greatest threat to historic buildings in your community?"), many of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission's constituents respond with answers whose formulations suggest that their fellow Rhode Islanders do not adequately support preservation. Despite their successes over the past decades, Rhode Island's preservationists believe that they are too small a group and that the benefits of participation in preservation activities should be available and of interest to many more Rhode Islanders.

This lack of support is often described as a failure to fund preservation activities adequately. But, even more often, respondents suggest that this lack of economic support result from the lack of a broad understanding among the state's voters of the true value of historic resources. For example, the question "What do you think is the most important challenge facing preservation in Rhode Island in the coming years?" elicited the following responses.

"Keeping people excited about preservation."

"Need to help people understand that preservation is for all of us."

"Educating the public...preservation is not elitist."

"Address the idea of 'individual freedom' vs responsibility of individuals to preservation of the community's heritage."



Such answers suggest that, while specific threats to historic resources must be addressed by specifically tailored goals, actions, and programs, the greatest challenge to the state's preservationists is to persuade other Rhode Islanders that historical preservation is worthy of their support, that appreciation of the real value of historic buildings and sites can improve the lives of all Rhode Islanders in very practical ways.

Public education programming to address this challenge is defined as a goal (in response to several of the issues addressed above). But apart from this specific and targeted educational programming, Rhode Island preservationists should look for opportunities for education about preservation throughout their programming. For the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission, activities in all program areas should be examined for educational potential as well as for their potential to satisfy other requirements.

## **PART 140-8 STRATEGIES--PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION**

### **8-1 SURVEY OF ABOVE-GROUND RESOURCES**

The survey program includes activities which locate, record and evaluate Rhode Island's historic resources. The statewide survey is the initial step in the state's historic preservation planning process and is the foundation program for all other activities of the RIHP&HC.

Beginning in 1967, the RIHP&HC has systematically surveyed the entire land area of the state for above-ground historic resources. Surveys were conducted on a community or neighborhood basis and were developed to the level of detail which allowed for evaluation of properties for the National Register. These surveys are, in general, comprehensive--the intention has been to collect information about all property types within a town or neighborhood. The products of the survey program include a short history of the development of each community or neighborhood; an inventory of historic properties within each community or neighborhood; and recommendations for actions which assist in the preservation of these historic resources. For some areas these recommendations are very elaborate and specific; for other areas, the recommendations are limited to an evaluation of those historic properties which appear to meet the eligibility criteria for the National Register.

Rhode Island's survey program has now covered all of the state's communities. Each of Rhode Island's communities has been examined, its historic resources studied and evaluated, the principal themes of its developmental history outlined and described in an essay.

The RIHP&HC surveys have proved to be useful. Most historic properties are identified and located. When a property not recorded in the survey is discovered (a relatively rare occurrence), a developmental context exists for the evaluation of the previously unknown property. When, as is more common, additional information is discovered concerning properties covered in the survey, the information can be fitted into the existing context, amplifying, modifying, and improving it.

The organization of the survey by community and neighborhood has demonstrated its utility. The development of the state over the last 350 years can be most easily and usefully understood through town development. From a management and planning perspective, most decisions concerning the protection of historic resources are made in a community context.

For some categories of resources, the community context has not proven to be the most useful. Included in this category are groups of resources whose development and significance is principally beyond the community's borders, such as lighthouses, state-owned properties, military fortifications, and the Blackstone Canal. The survey of these categories has been addressed in a number of ways. Lighthouses are the subject of a multiple property National Register nomination which includes an essay describing their development. State-owned historic

properties are surveyed separately, as well as within their community contexts; a report on these resources has been published; it describes their development, evaluates them, and makes recommendations for National Register listing. The Blackstone Canal has been the subject of several studies, culminating in a National Register nomination for all eligible components of the Canal. Landscapes, both designed and agricultural, are presently being surveyed by the RIHP&HC; publication of a survey report, to include a developmental history, inventory, and National Register recommendations, is planned. Similarly, the state's outdoor sculpture is now being surveyed and will be the subject of a short survey report.

Military fortifications have not yet been sufficiently studied. Much is known of individual components of the fortifications built over the last three hundred years to defend Narragansett Bay, but this information has not yet been systematized or summarized in an easily accessible format. Rhode Island's historic watercraft have not yet been studied, and it is likely that some may be eligible for the National Register. The Ocean State has a legacy of maritime activity as old as settlement; the surviving watercraft of this coastal and sea-going history should be examined, surveyed, and evaluated.

As interpretations of the historic environment alter and improve, some categories of resources require re-examination within their community contexts. Identified as a priority for the next five years in this respect are resources related to the history of Rhode Island's African-American communities and resources related to the development of suburban architecture throughout the state.

Occasionally a municipality will identify a need for additional survey to achieve a goal identified within the community's comprehensive plan; in such a case, the RIHP&HC may assist the community with technical advice and/or funding.

The utility of the survey will be improved when it is available on electronic database. Improving the quality and comprehensiveness of the survey to achieve this end is a high priority.

***STRATEGIES:***

1. Complete landscape and sculpture surveys. Publish both.
2. In evaluating applications for CLG or other funding, give high priority to projects which propose to study and evaluate resources related to the history of African-American Rhode Islanders. Especially important in this regard are the towns of South County and northern Rhode Island.
3. In evaluating applications for CLG or other funding, give high priority to projects which will study, evaluate, and nominate to the National Register eligible properties related to the development of suburban architecture.

4. Survey and evaluate military fortifications. Develop a context for evaluation and registration requirements for elements of the system of fortifications located throughout Narragansett Bay.
5. Consider a survey of the state's historic watercraft, perhaps in partnership with the Museum of Yachting (Newport) or the Herreshoff Museum (Bristol).
6. Re-survey as necessary areas of the state which lack comprehensive surveys sufficient to complete the National Register database.
7. When feasible, assist communities in conducting additional surveys needed to achieve a goal identified in the community's comprehensive plan.

## **8-2 STATE PROPERTIES**

Through their state government, Rhode Islanders are the owners of many historic properties. From the State House, arguably Rhode Island's most important historic building, to armories, hospitals, prisons, schools, police barracks, bridges and highways, airports, and parklands, the state government is a substantial property owner.

Many of the state-owned historic properties continue to serve their original purpose or have been adapted successfully for new uses. But others have outlived their original uses as the functions of state government have changed. Some of these buildings will find new life and new uses under new ownership, as cities and towns or private developers acquire them; others will be adapted by state agencies to suit new requirements. In addition, some state agencies may continue to acquire properties (such as individual houses for use as group homes) which may have historic significance.

Further, pressures on the state's financial resources have left many of the state's most important resources with inadequate funding. Buildings and lands which could be sources of education, pleasure, and utility for Rhode Islanders are not used to their full potential because the state cannot afford the costs associated with maintenance, restoration, and interpretation. Especially noteworthy in this regard are the state's armories, a remarkable group of buildings, some of which have outlived their usefulness as armories; Newport Colony House, one of the state's great architectural treasures, which is not regularly open to visitors; and Fort Adams, a National Historic Landmark in Newport, which is threatened by neglect.

Many Rhode Islanders look to the RIHP&HC as a liaison between their local historic or preservation society and the state agency which owns or administers a historic property they care about. This is a useful role for the RIHP&HC which should be continued by maintaining the links between the state agency and local historical groups.

## **STRATEGIES**

1. Continue to monitor changes to the status of state-owned properties to insure that deaccessioned properties are protected to the fullest extent possible by identification of uses and alterations which meet the Secretary of Interior's (SOI's) Standards and by the attachment of preservation easements when sale is contemplated. Continue to respond to requests for comment received through the Intergovernmental Review Process, which circulates notices of proposed actions by the State Properties Committee (Department of Administration).
2. Insure that state agencies which own or acquire properties are fully aware of the historic and architectural significance of their properties and insure that such agencies have access to adequate technical assistance to meet the SOI's Standards.
3. Work with the Department of Environmental Management toward improved maintenance and interpretation of all historic properties in state parks, especially Fort Adams. The RIHP&HC should consider with RIDEM how best to manage Fort Adams (see also recommendations for SURVEY, including military fortifications, many of which are publicly owned and managed by the RIDEM).
4. Identify specific actions which will improve the access of Rhode Islanders to the Newport Colony House.
5. To the extent possible, monitor physical changes and changes in use for state-owned historic properties to assist state agencies in meeting their obligations toward such properties.

### **8-3 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of properties worthy of preservation. At present, about 12,500 Rhode Island properties are included in the National Register; many are listed in one of the state's 136 historic districts. About 7,000 more properties may be eligible for listing. These properties are also listed on the State Register. National Register listing is principally an honor, a recognition of the property's significance in our history, but it also insures review of publicly-funded projects which might do harm to the property.

The many Rhode Island properties now listed in the National Register reflect the varied and long history of settlement here. Few of the major themes of Rhode Island history are unrepresented in the Register. Among the notable exceptions is the granite industry of Westerly which for many decades cut and shipped handsome grey building stone throughout the region. Also underrepresented on the National Register are small rural mill villages; while the mill villages of the Blackstone Valley and the Pawtuxet Valley are at least partially documented in the Register, some of the large number of small settlements clustered around small falls in the southern reach of the state are not well documented (including Bradford, Kenyon, Hillsdale, Harris, Arkwright, Hope, Potter Hill).

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission has nominated fewer properties to the National Register in the past five years than in any five-year period preceding 1990. For a variety of reasons, very few nominations are now being written and processed.

When asked to identify properties in their communities which are historic but are not yet listed in the National Register, respondents to a planning issues questionnaire issued by the RIHP&HC in 1994 consistently identified properties which were either already listed in the National Register or already identified in surveys as potentially eligible for the Register. While the numbers of nominations has not kept pace with survey activities in the last five years, the RIHP&HC survey and project review programs do not apparently fail to account for whole classes of properties which Rhode Islanders see as important. The National Register program, however, has not fulfilled its potential to educate Rhode Islanders about their historic resources. The RIHP&HC should work toward a greater number of entries of eligible properties to the National Register, with special priority given to nominations for properties identified in community comprehensive plans and for properties which are the object of local efforts for preservation and restoration.

Rhode Islanders continue to be interested in the National Register and to want to have properties they own and care about listed in the National Register. The Register can be a useful public information mechanism--entry of resources on the Register is of concern to local preservation organizations and would be more regularly reported in the press if the RIHP&HC made a greater effort to publicize entry.

***STRATEGIES:***

1. Implement the Multiple Property Submission for single-family houses in at least one community to test its utility for lowering the cost of and improving access to the process of nominating properties to the National Register.
2. Develop and distribute a publication which explains the National Register process and identifies all of the properties currently listed.
3. Nominate eligible landscapes and sculptures to the National Register, using completed surveys and context statements, when available.
4. In allocating resources among National Register activities, give high priority to resources which represent the granite industry of Westerly and small rural mill villages, especially in South County towns.
5. In allocating resources among National Register activities, give high priority to resources which are threatened (and for which National Register listing is likely to make a substantial difference), to resources which are identified by communities in their comprehensive plans as candidates for the National Register, and to resources which are the object of local efforts for preservation and restoration.

6. Investigate the feasibility of publishing some National Register nominations.
7. Process in a timely manner all nominations presented for consideration; as resources permit, prepare nominations.

#### **8-4 ARCHAEOLOGY**

Hundreds of archaeological sites, dating from as early as 8,000-10,000 years ago, are located throughout Rhode Island; and many shipwrecks lie beneath Narragansett Bay. The location, study, and protection of these sites is an important component of Rhode Island's historic preservation program.

The Commission has funded archaeological studies throughout the state. Many archaeological sites have been found along the coast where sources of food and other natural resources have been available over the last 5,000 years.

The last decade has seen important finds in archaeological projects funded by the RIHP&HC. On Block Island, archaeologists have discovered the remains of an Indian village dating from 2000 B.C., the oldest year-round village known in southern New England. Recently, archaeologists have located maize in a site which predates the arrival of Europeans in Rhode Island, the first plant material evidence of Native Americans' agricultural practices. Excavations at Smith's Castle in North Kingstown have revealed elements of a colonial trading post.

The archaeological component of historical preservation calls for a specialized approach to protecting resources. As a result of having identified more than 2,000 sites throughout the state, Commission archaeologists are able to predict the likelihood that a given area which may be planned for construction contains archaeological sites. The ability to predict with reliability where archaeological sites may be located is one measure of the success of the Commission's archaeology program.

The RIHP&HC is also responsible for monitoring all archaeological explorations of state-owned land and water. Artifacts recovered during excavations are cared for and stored under the supervision of the Commission. More than 100,000 artifacts have been catalogued and are available at the RIHP&HC repository to scholars and students working on research projects. A second repository will be developed within the next five years by RIDOT.

The Commission's archaeology program necessarily involves coordination with a number of other archaeologists working on projects which the Commission will review, monitor, or fund. To insure that high standards are adhered to in planning, excavating, and studying sites and in the curation and storage of artifacts, the Commission has published performance standards for archaeological projects.

The RIHP&HC survey of archaeological resources relies heavily on the project review program to identify and locate sites. Given the financial constraints anticipated for the next five years, this is not likely to change; the bulk of the new data about archaeological sites is likely to derive from reactive responses to proposals to develop land. Insufficient resources are available to carry out a major archaeological survey effort. The RIHP&HC must rely upon the actions of others (land developers, builders) to produce archaeological data which will increase our knowledge of Rhode Island's past. This is a real constraint on the character of the archaeological survey and should be addressed by the special care given to the research design of archaeological projects which are not driven by projects review.

Contexts established and developed for the understanding of Rhode Island's Native American past have proved to be useful constructs to guide research projects and to direct project review activities. The RIHP&HC needs a similarly useful context for the understanding of non-Indian archaeological resources. Some progress has been made toward the development of a context for the southern Rhode Island region, but additional work will improve the ability of the RIHP&HC to evaluate sites and potential sites from the historic period. Similarly, the development of contexts for the understanding of archaeological resources which are under water should be a high priority.

Data about archaeological sites should be as widely available as possible without compromising the specific locations of sites. Progress has been made on computerizing the sites files of the RIHP&HC. This progress should be continued until all sites are available on an electronic database. Archaeological sites are not as highly visible as other cultural resources. Widespread public support for the preservation of archaeological sites and for the expenditure of public funds on archaeological research and excavation is more difficult to engender than support for preservation of buildings and neighborhoods, but Rhode Islanders are interested in the underground record of their history and will support archaeological research and excavations if they have a clear understanding of their value. Special efforts should be made to develop programs which create public knowledge of and support for archaeology.

Many land-disturbing activities are not reviewed by the RIHP&HC because no actions or licensing by state or federal government is necessary. Some of these activities are regulated by towns and cities (through their zoning, sub-division, design review, and open space planning actions). The technical assistance offered by the RIHP&HC to communities as they write their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances is an opportunity to identify for communities the chance to incorporate mechanisms which protect archaeological sites into their plans, ordinances, and review processes.

### ***STRATEGIES:***

1. Write and publish a book on Rhode Island's Indian sites.
2. Work toward the development of a context for the evaluation of non-Indian archaeological sites. Consider the effectiveness of limiting the context statement to a brief essay



which identifies classes of properties which deserve special care in the project review process and/or adopting property types used in above-ground survey for archaeological resources.

3. Work toward the development of a context for understanding archaeological resources which are underwater.
4. Continue to enter site data in the archaeology database until backlog is completed. Develop a mechanism to insure that sites located in the future are entered in the database.
5. Work toward the development of a community archaeology program which will involve a broader audience in the theory and practice of archaeology in Rhode Island. The community archaeology program may include, among other components, school-based programming and a field school.
6. When the RIHP&HC can initiate or assist others in initiating an archaeological survey without the constraints imposed by project review, special care should be exercised to insure that survey design and project location reflect RIHP&HC priorities.
7. Continue RIHP&HC's role in technical assistance to communities as comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances are prepared and as subdivision (and other) regulations are prepared to insure that, where possible, protection of archaeological sites is incorporated into these legal tools.
8. Continue to hold the RIHP&HC's Conference on the Archaeology of the Narragansett Basin. Expand the audience to include members of the general public. Consider publishing the proceedings.

## **8-5 PROJECT REVIEW**

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 gives the RIHP& HC the authority to review all federal projects and all federally funded or licensed projects to determine whether they will harm resources which are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register. The 1968 Rhode Island Historic Preservation Act gives the Commission authority to review state-funded, state-permitted, and municipal projects also. If the Commission finds that a project will harm an historic resource, then it works with the project's sponsors to find ways to avoid or lessen the damage.

To ensure that the review process works effectively, the RIHP& HC has established close working relationships with municipal governments, local historic district commissions, and other state agencies such as the Department of Transportation and the Coastal Resources Management Council. As a result, consideration for the protection of historic resources is incorporated into the early planning process for government projects in Rhode Island.

Since 1968, the RIHP& HC has reviewed more than 20,000 government-funded projects to protect historic resources from harm. Over the past few years, the Commission has reviewed about 1,000 projects each year.

Planning for the future of the project review program must acknowledge that the program is a reactive one. Over the next five years the RIHP&HC will play a role in several major public projects: the relocation of I-95, the construction of a large shopping mall in downtown Providence, the electrification of the Northeast Rail Corridor, the development of the third rail track to Davisville, and the Blackstone Valley bikepath. Major projects as yet unidentified may arise over the course of the next five years, and the RIHP&HC must be prepared to meet the challenge of responding to activities which cannot yet be foreseen. It is possible, for example, that a large gambling casino in southern Rhode Island may be developed. The RIHP&HC should be prepared to assist federal and state agencies in responding to its impact on historic resources.

Review of publicly-funded projects has proceeded most efficiently when funding agencies (such as DOT) are aware of and responsive to the requirements of federal and state regulations concerning project review. When a sponsoring agency's projects are large in size and number, the RIHP&HC has the opportunity to develop a continuing relationship with agency which increases the likelihood of effective and efficient project review. When sponsoring agencies do not have this continuing relationship with the RIHP&HC or when they delegate the review process to others, the chance to develop a working relationship with the RIHP&HC is not available. In such cases, project review necessarily becomes a preservation education activity, and RIHP&HC project review staff must assist sponsors in interpreting the regulatory mechanisms, in understanding general preservation practices, and in the application of the SOI's Standards to preservation problems. In such cases, project review staff need targeted educational materials to insure effective review. Further, project review staff may be able to identify unmet survey needs arising from the review process. Each year as the annual work program is prepared RIHP&HC staff should examine the previous year's project review record to determine if unmet survey needs should be addressed. The project review process should have a major impact on the creation of survey and National Register priorities in annual planning.

Project review by the RIHP&HC also requires coordination with other preservation agencies, especially local historic district commissions which may review the same projects. As more Rhode Island communities consider and adopt historic district zoning, this coordination will become even more necessary, time-consuming, and valuable. Federal and state agencies also rely on the RIHP&HC to act as a liaison for them with local historic district commissions and other interested community groups.

From an internal operational standpoint, project review is among the most complex tasks performed by the RIHP&HC, involving several staff members who represent different disciplines and concerns. Scheduling and tracking systems are necessarily more complex than in other program areas. In external operations, there is a similar complexity: project review is the nexus through which the RIHP&HC's relationships with public agencies, developers, property owners, local historic district commissions, the Narragansett tribe, and historical and preservation organizations are developed and focused. This complexity should be recognized by the

particular attention given to project review in allocating resources and in planning for the day-to-day operations of the RIHP&HC.

**STRATEGIES:**

1. Continue to respond to all requests for project review while working toward institutionalized relationships between the RIHP&HC and project-sponsoring agencies.
2. Evaluate on an annual basis needs for survey and for educational materials identified by the project review process for possible inclusion in annual work program.
3. Include in all educational materials provided to local historic district commissions materials which explain the coordination of review by RIHP&HC and HDCs. Determine if additional materials are needed, especially those which address recurrent design, planning, and mitigation issues.
4. Consider modifying the nature and level of staff allocated to project review to address the large volume of paper and data entry work which project review generates. This would insure more efficient maintenance of the computer log and project files; improve coordination among different areas of project review (e.g., architectural review, archaeological review, historical review); and enable the project review staff more time for other duties.

**8-6 CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

Many of Rhode Island's most historic communities have developed preservation programs of their own in an effort to protect the value of their most historic areas. Under the Certified Local Government (CLG) program, the RIHP&HC offers funding and technical assistance to these communities. To qualify for CLG status, communities create local commissions which have the authority to review proposed changes and new construction in a designated district.

Certified local governments are eligible to apply to the RIHP&HC for small matching grants to carry out their own preservation projects.

The RIHP&HC also provides technical assistance to CLGs on the administration of local historic districts. Since 1993, the RIHP&HC with the Rhode Island Alliance of Historic District Commissions has prepared and sponsored a three-day training course for local commissioners.

Apart from assistance to already certified communities, the RIHP&HC provides technical assistance to communities considering the adoption of historic district zoning. RIHP&HC staff have drafted ordinances and maps, helped to plan and carry out public meetings to engender support for ordinances, and offered technical advice on historic district zoning. The RIHP&HC has prepared a model ordinance and model regulations as well as fact sheets on zoning to assist interested citizens in presenting an ordinance to the council for consideration.

Several certified local governments have identified a need for information and assistance on developing legal tools for preservation which are less comprehensive than historic district zoning, such as demolition ordinances, conservation districts, and the like. The RIHP&HC should investigate such legal and planning tools as alternatives to and supplements for historic district zoning and should develop a mechanism for sharing this information with CLGs and others.

Further, some constituents have noted that certification (and eligibility to apply for CLG grants) are available solely to communities which have adopted historic district zoning. Many activities, including public education projects, which might move a community closer to actual regulation of changes to its historic buildings are not now eligible. If a mechanism can be developed to expand the number of certified local governments to include those which have a well-developed preservation program but not yet adopted historic district zoning, the effectiveness of CLG grant projects could be increased.

***STRATEGIES:***

1. Using CLG grants and other resources, work toward insuring that every local historic district commission has:

-a survey of its district(s) which is sufficiently detailed and up-to-date allow HDC members to make informed decisions. Such a survey may be available in several formats: as a set of data sheets, as a descriptive inventory, as a set of photographs, as an electronic database, or a combination of these. Each community's survey should be available in the formats which the local HDC identifies as most useful to its members and constituents. At a minimum, the RIHP&HC should assist historic district commissions in creating a list of properties (identified by plat and lot number) subject to historic district zoning.

-appropriate public education materials to explain the function and processes of each HDC to its constituents. Such materials may take several forms (which are best determined by each HDC), but at a minimum each CLG should have an inexpensively produced free brochure explaining its procedures to applicants.

-access to appropriate technical written materials to assist in making informed decisions, to help applicants make appropriate decisions about their properties, and to assist local officials in making decisions about planning issues which may have an impact on historic properties. Where appropriate, an HDC may adopt particular written standards and guidelines whose publication and distribution may be assisted with CLG grants. In other cases, the RIHP&HC should encourage HDCs to use "The Easy Guide to Rehab Standards" (published by RIHP&HC in 1992) as a guide for its own decision-making and for the plans of applicants.

-access to appropriate training to carry out its functions in a responsible and effective manner.

-access to appropriate technical advice as needed (architects, planners, communication specialists, etc.).

2. Continue to sponsor the CORE workshops on a regular basis to provide training for local historic district commissioners and community planning staffs.
3. Investigate alternative and supplementary legal tools such as conservation districts to determine their suitability for Rhode Island communities. Develop a mechanism to share this information with CLGs and others.
4. Consider altering the RIHP&HC's CLG regulations to allow for certification of all local governments which have developed local preservation programs.
5. Monitor the staffing needs of HDCs and, when unmet staffing needs are identified, explore means for the RIHP&HC to assist, either on a project basis or with long-term assistance.

## **8-7 PLANNING**

### **8-7-1 Community Planning**

There is a special and still-developing relationship between the state historical preservation planning process and the comprehensive plans of the state's towns and cities. Local governments are important implementors of preservation activities and can be important agents for preservation. The RIHP&HC has a long history of close working relationships with local governments, based on the small size of the state; the accessibility of local officials and the centralization of the state's preservation efforts; and the organization of the RIHP&HC survey.

The most recent and important connection between the RIHP&HC's planning processes and individual communities results from the state-mandated requirement that each town and city create a comprehensive plan and that each plan incorporate an element describing the community's plan for the future of its historic resources. The comprehensive planning act allows the RIHP&HC to set goals and policies that must be embodied in local plans; further, the RIHP&HC evaluates and comments on local plans. Once plans have been adopted by communities and approved by a variety of state agencies, including the RIHP&HC, they are codified as each community writes or re-writes its zoning ordinance to conform to its plan.

The comprehensive planning act also provides that local comprehensive plans be consistent with the State Guide Plan. When this State Historical Preservation Plan has been adopted as an element of the State Guide Plan, it will become part of that consistency review, performed by the Division of Planning.

The RIHP&HC has, over the last four years, developed a Special Planning Initiative to accommodate the needs of local communities for technical and financial assistance in the preparation of community comprehensive plans. The RIHP&HC funded a handful of plans, participated in the creation of several, and advised in the development of many more. As it is developed and adopted, each plan is reviewed by the RIHP&HC for its ability to meet certain minimum threshold requirements established by the RIHP&HC.

This process of review has necessarily involved the RIHP&HC in the value definition and goal formulation stages of many communities' planning. The review process is useful for community planning staffs, consultants, boards, and councils, which have access to professional planning assistance on a routine basis. The process is also useful for the RIHP&HC, as it ensures that we have access to an important constituency on a regular basis. This conduit of information and the routine interchange of information and advice improves the quality of RIHP&HC's support for community preservation efforts.

As the first stage of this still-developing relationship draws to a close, the RIHP&HC is evaluating both the resulting plans and the process of their creation. This evaluation is now substantially complete.

As to process issues, RIHP&HC's involvement in the local planning process has proved to have worth and should be a continuing activity of the agency. The RIHP&HC's participation in the process has most value when it occurs early in the community's planning process and when the RIHP&HC participates in, or at least monitors, the process throughout its length. And, finally, the process of participation in local planning activities is very costly--resources of time and energy are stretched thin when the RIHP&HC attempts the same high level of participation in every community's planning. This suggests that in future the RIHP&HC should attempt to identify those communities where a high level of participation is most likely to have positive effect for historic resources and assign high priority to those communities. Without neglecting the needs of every town and city for technical assistance from the RIHP&HC, concentration of effort should be placed in those location where participation is likely to most efficacious.

As to issues of content, the evaluation process reveals that many communities have insufficient understanding of the role of local government in the preservation of archaeological sites; these resources are neglected more often than any other class. The RIHP&HC needs to develop ways to help communities to protect their archaeological heritage.

In evaluating community plans, the RIHP&HC has measured each against certain minimum requirements; each plan must address at least eight specific issues related to preservation planning: the identification of resources; data gaps; threats; goals and strategies; assessment of progress; prioritizing and scheduling; actors; and inclusion of preservation in other (non-preservation) elements of the plan. The particular fashion in which in a community addresses these issues has been evaluated for its suitability to the community involved; the RIHP&HC has not specified how each issue will be addressed, preferring instead to consider whether a community has had the opportunity (through reliable data and access to planning information) to consider rationally the extent to which it will commit its resources to historical

preservation. Some communities have made very elaborate and ambitious plans, using the preservation of a community's special character as a guide to action in many arenas. Other communities have committed themselves to a more moderate course and, typically, have planned for further investigation, preservation education programs, and a future consideration of regulatory measures.

The RIHP&HC has summarized and evaluated these plans on the basis of their suitability to the community for which they were prepared. This suitability is related to the quality and nature of the resources within the community, of course, but this is only one measure of a plan's appropriateness. Far more important is the awareness, willingness, ability, and commitment of a community to participate in historical preservation, and on the institutional capacity of local government and local historical and preservation organizations to perform preservation tasks well. The RIHP&HC will base its future planning activities on these assessments.

### **8-7-2 Planning for Historic Landscapes**

Planning for Rhode Island's historic landscapes, especially its agricultural land, will be a special challenge over the next five years. The publication of the landscape survey will be a substantial step toward the comprehensive identification and evaluation of historic land areas, but the RIHP&HC will need to develop a specialized plan for its own activities in land preservation. Especially important in this regard is an effective understanding of other agencies' programs, plans, missions, and goals.

The RIHP&HC needs to insure that the review of projects which will have an impact on the state's open land areas is based upon adequate knowledge about planning processes now undertaken by state and federal agencies, by local communities, and by private organizations and citizens. A number of agencies (state, federal, local, and private) now at work have as part of their mission the preservation of open land. These agencies work in land preservation to preserve scenic beauty, to protect valuable ecosystems, to preserve specific habitats, to limit development, to preserve community character, to provide for recreational and educational opportunities. For the RIHP&HC these imperatives are matched by a desire to preserve some landscapes in a form which documents the lives and work of previous generations. But these missions overlap and have much in common.

To help insure that the historic character and appearance of the state's landscapes is accounted for in the land planning process, the RIHP&HC needs to identify each of the actors in the process, to develop a clear understanding of the agenda of each of the actors, and to identify those aspects of the process where our shared concern for the preservation of open land works to the benefit of its historic character as well.

### **8-7-3 Planning for Disaster**

The RIHP&HC should have a plan for addressing an unforeseen natural disaster which damages or destroys large numbers of historic buildings and/or archaeological sites. While the probability of a major hurricane or earthquake is not high, the possibility should be accounted for in the RIHP&HC's planning activities. To that end, a disaster plan should be developed in the next five years in consultation with other appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, in particular the federal and state emergency management offices.

#### ***STRATEGIES:***

1. Continue to advise elected local officials concerning their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances to insure that as these documents are written and revised they account for the special needs of historic resources.
2. Work more closely with communities which contain archaeologically sensitive areas to help insure that the special requirements of archaeological sites are met by development of review processes for new construction.
3. Publish and distribute the RIHP&HC's model historic district zoning ordinance, model rules of procedure for historic district commissions, and fact sheets on historic district zoning.
4. Continue to consult regularly with the Division of Planning concerning preservation planning progress in the state.
5. Consider convening annually a meeting of preservation leaders from across the state to report on RIHP&HC activities and to discuss RIHP&HC's annual work program.
6. Prepare a plan for the preservation of historic land areas.
7. Prepare a plan for RIHP&HC's response to a major natural disaster.

### **8-8 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE/ARCHITECTURAL ASSISTANCE TO PROPERTY OWNERS**

The RIHP&HC administers federal and state credits for certified rehabilitations of historic buildings and also administers a revolving loan fund, each designed to assist property owners in the costs of rehabilitation and maintenance of historic properties. At present, the RIHP&HC does not have grant funds for acquisition or development. On occasion, when planning funds are available, the RIHP&HC provides financial assistance in planning projects to owners of historic properties which have special historic significance or whose preservation has broad public benefit.



To qualify for federal tax credits, a property must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places; it must be used to produce income; the rehabilitation work must be substantial; and the work must meet the SOI's standards. The RIHP&HC's architects provide technical assistance to property owners in the design of rehabilitation projects, monitor the work, and issues certificates of compliance with the standards. Since 1976, these credits have stimulated the rehabilitation and commercial use of more than 266 historic properties in Rhode Island, representing a capital investment of more than \$211,000,000. The credits have created jobs, revitalized streets and neighborhoods, and provided needed housing.

Since 1989 Rhode Island has provided a state income tax credit to help property owners meet the costs of maintaining their historic houses. To be eligible a residence must be listed in the State Register or be included in a local historic district zone and, in addition, must be occupied by its owner. Most exterior rehabilitation and maintenance work will qualify for the credit, provided the work is approved by the RIHP&HC.

The Historical Preservation Loan Fund provides low interest loans to save and restore historic buildings. As loans are repaid, additional projects are funded. The RIHP&HC has loaned acquisition and development funds to individuals, to communities, and to preservation organizations, including the Providence Preservation Society's Revolving Loan Fund.

Further, the RIHP&HC accepts and monitors preservation easements on historic properties. Such easements offer donors the assurance that their property is protected from inappropriate change in perpetuity by the requirement that RIHP&HC review proposed changes. In addition, the donation of an easement may create a substantial tax saving for the donor since the value of the easement may be tax-deductible.

For a variety of reasons, the RIHP&HC does not anticipate expansion of grant and loan programs in the next five years. While the RIHP&HC is prepared to administer a greatly expanded financial assistance program, a number of factors suggest that efforts in this area should be concentrated on improving the accessibility and usefulness of already available programs. For example, the RIHP&HC is currently considering the concentration of its loans on projects where small but vital pieces of a financing package are needed. The ability to provide an important part of a larger package in partnership with other agencies or banks may have great value in the future and should be carefully monitored for its potential value.

Too few property owners know about and take advantage of these financial assistance programs. While access to loan and grant funds will always be limited by the number of dollars available, tax incentive programs could be far more widely used. While the application process for federal tax credit and the final award of the credits are not within RIHP&HC's purview, the process for state tax credits is. This process should be closely examined by RIHP&HC to determine if the process is as simple as possible for property owners, consistent with good management principles and the intentions of the program.

As RIHP&HC staff monitor and evaluate projects for their ability to meet standards required for tax credit and loan programs, there is a substantial opportunity for education about

preservation issues. Owners and developers seek guidance in meeting the standards and need technical assistance on a one-to-one basis. Further, preservation projects using financial assistance programs are often highly visible within their communities. The RIHP&HC should seek ways to capitalize on the educational potential of financial assistance programs. The RIHP&HC should consider intensive education efforts in a specific localities where owners evidence interest in assistance programs, where the quality of resources or their state of dilapidation suggest special care, or where the opportunity for partnership with a local preservation or historical organization suggest that well planned and executed preservation projects will result.

The RIHP&HC should seek out additional partners in its education efforts about financial assistance programs. Organizations such as the Rhode Island Builders Association, the Construction Specifications Institute, realtors, and accountants need information about financial assistance in easily understood, well packaged formats. The RIHP&HC should consider developing education programs and materials for such groups, using methods which have been specifically designed to suit their needs.

The monitoring of financial assistance projects has suggested a number of areas of technical information needed by property owners, developers, and others on a routine basis. While the technical expertise of the RIHP&HC staff is available on a one-to-one basis, consideration should also be given to the development of educational materials (printed materials, brochures, videos, workshops) on subjects which recur often. Identified for consideration are issues related to: estimating costs of rehabilitation work, windows, stone masonry, insect damage, and dealing with hazardous materials.

### ***STRATEGIES:***

1. Evaluate how best to use the limited funds available in the Historic Preservation Loan Fund to achieve maximum effect, especially the provision of small elements of larger financing packages.
2. Examine the application process and the standards applied in the state tax credit program to determine if this program could be more widely used. Alter the administrative processes or increase the availability of public information about this program if needed.
3. Consider more intensive public education on financial assistance programs, perhaps targeted geographically or in partnership with others.
4. Develop educational materials related to specific preservation issues.
5. When planning grant funds are available, give highest priority to those properties which have extraordinary historic significance or whose preservation has broad public benefit.
6. Review in a timely fashion all applications for federal and state tax credits, loan applications, and grant applications.

7. Monitor existing easements and seek donations of new easements.

## **8-9 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

Communication with the RIHP&HC's constituents has been an important part of the agency's programming since its inception. Through publications, workshops, lectures, walking tours, and conferences, the RIHP&HC has maintained contact with members of the public and with groups who have special needs for information about historic preservation issues.

- For members of local historic district commissions and for citizens advocating for historic district zoning in their communities, the RIHP&HC provides fact sheets and other publications, workshops, presentations on the National Register, and the CORE training course.
- For property owners, the RIHP&HC has provided preservation education through the survey reports, the Preservation Library, fact sheets and National Register presentations, occasional publications, and workshops on timely issues such as accessibility and lead hazards.
- For Rhode Island's many preservationists, both professionals and volunteers, the RIHP&HC produces a newsletter and sponsors an annual conference, which includes panel discussions, the opportunity to network, the chance to celebrate successes, and learn about specialized preservation topics.

A number of factors suggest that this commitment to responding to Rhode Islanders' interest in the physical evidence of their pasts should be continued and expanded. Much of the RIHP&HC's educational efforts have been targeted to specialized audiences with demonstrated needs for information on particular issues. These valuable educational efforts should be expanded to include a broader audience with less specialized concerns.

Rhode Islanders need information about the real value of their historic resources provided in formats which are easily accessible. They need to know that historical preservation can have an impact on the quality of the environment which surrounds all of us every day; that preservation can increase the choices available to all Rhode Islanders about where and how to live; that well preserved evidence of our past is not a luxury for the affluent only but an enrichment of our state's civic life; and that principles of preservation are often a very practical and economical basis for making decisions about the future of buildings. In short, Rhode Islanders need information about the "why" of historical preservation as well as about its "how." In evaluating future preservation education efforts, the RIHP&HC should consider the potential of each effort not only to address specific questions but also to increase general support for the ideals of preservation.

## ***STRATEGIES:***

1. Continue to publish the RIHP&HC newsletter; consider defining more explicitly its audience and purpose.
2. Consider regular news releases to newspapers and newsletters on a variety of topics, both hard news and softer issues.
3. Consider developing educational programs which will allow the RIHP&HC to become a programming source for local organizations, including a speakers bureau and a videotape library.
4. Provide assistance to local communities in planning and publicizing preservation activities, especially Preservation Week.
5. As each year's annual work program is prepared, consider each task for its public education potential as well as its ability to satisfy other requirements. This will be an especially useful strategy for CLG grants.
6. Provide workshops for specific audiences, such as CORE, heritage education resources, hands-on classes for property owners, downtown revitalization.
7. Continue to provide publications designed for specific audiences to address their identified needs for information on specialized topics.
8. Continue to sponsor the annual statewide preservation conference.

## **8-10 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

As more data about historic resources becomes available and as the number and character of programs which are designed to protect such resources increase, the management of information at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission becomes more critical. At present, the RIHP&HC actively seeks out and collects information about historical resources, information about the constituents of historical preservation, and information about decision-making processes within local communities and within state, federal, and local agencies. This data must be appropriately managed to insure that the RIHP&HC's decision-making processes are as effective as possible and to insure that others who rely upon the RIHP&HC for information may do so with reasonable confidence.

Within the RIHP&HC, different program areas have information about many historic resources, about preservation constituents, and about preservation decision-making processes. Much of this data is now being computerized:

**Main data file:** The RIHP&HC's main data file is designed to include historical and architectural information about all properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places (and, perhaps, properties determined eligible for the National Register). Entry of data to the main file is a high priority for the RIHP&HC and is now about 75 percent complete. The main data file references paper files for photographs of each structure but does not include photographs. For a number of National Register districts, only incomplete information is available for entry into the database; improving the quality and comprehensiveness of this data is the RIHP&HC's highest priority for survey and information management.

**Building survey file:** These paper files contain information about 50,000 buildings in Rhode Island; the field survey forms vary in the level of information collected--at a minimum, a photograph and locator are required; most field survey forms also include historical and architectural information and evaluation. The building survey file provides the context for evaluating and registering Rhode Island's most important historic resources. It is not anticipated that this file will be computerized.

**Building survey maps:** Two sets of United States Geological Survey (USGS) quads locate all properties on and eligible for the National Register. This locator data is computerized using the Rhode Island Geographic Information System (RIGIS). Locator data on historic resources may be related through the RIGIS system to a variety of other kinds of information so that the information is useful for community planners and other local and state officials. The Division of Planning (Department of Administration), which manages the RIGIS, periodically updates the RIGIS data set of historic places. In the past, the RIHP&HC independently created large-scale maps of each surveyed community and of each area within a community which was surveyed intensively. Such maps are no longer created except where they are needed for public education (as for inclusion in a publication) or for registration of a district. These maps once served as the principal locator for many resources; now street addresses and plat and lot numbers serve as locators, since these are now available for all properties in Rhode Island.

**Archaeological survey file:** The survey files contain information about 2,000 known archaeological sites. Access to these files is limited. This file is now completely entered on an electronic database which can be used to aggregate and sort the data.

**Archaeological survey maps:** Archaeological sites are mapped on a set of USGS quads on which site locations have been marked.

**National Register files:** The NRHP files contain information about properties which have been listed on the Register, determined eligible for listing, considered eligible for listing, under study for listing, and listed but later demolished. Information contained in the National Register files supplements the main data file. Much of the survey effort of the RIHP&HC in the past five years has been spent improving the quality of the information in this file. Many of Rhode Island's most important historic districts had been listed on the National Register in the early years of the state program and did not have complete inventories which identified all of the properties included within their boundaries.

**Grant, loan, easement, and tax incentive files:** These files contain information about historic properties whose owners have received grants or loans, on which the RIHP&HC holds (or has held in the past) easements, or whose owners have applied for federal or state tax incentives. The entry of information onto databases for these program areas is well underway. The easement file is now fully computerized; it is expected that grant, loan, and tax incentive files will soon be complete.

**Planning file:** This is a paper file which contains information about historic resources, about constituents, about preservation planning progress. The planning file includes the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Plan, copies of all survey reports and other information used to define and develop contexts, plans and studies related to individual contexts, and context-by-context cross-references to other sources of information. For each community in Rhode Island, the planning file includes: a copy of the survey; a summary of the context; a list of properties on, eligible for, and recommended for the National Register; a list of properties which have received grants, loans, and tax incentives; a list of properties on which the RIHP&HC holds easements; a copy of the community's comprehensive plan, including the historic preservation element (or the latest draft when the plan is not yet completed); correspondence, meeting notes, and records of technical assistance on planning issues to the community's officials and other citizens.

**Planning log:** The planning log records contacts between the RIHP&HC and planners and others involved in the preparation of community comprehensive plans. The log is computerized and can be sorted by time period or community.

**Plan summaries:** As each community plan is adopted by town or city council and approved by the Department of Administration, its preservation element is summarized in a standardized and shortened form by RIHP&HC staff. Special attention is given to perceived needs for additional information about historic resources, to descriptions of past and current preservation efforts and evaluations of their effectiveness, to identified threats, to goals identified for and by the community, and to planned strategies and timetables. As they are prepared, these summaries represent a unique opportunity to examine the current status of Rhode Islanders' planning efforts for their historic resources. In addition, the summary format allows for the aggregation of information and the identification of statewide trends.

**Directory:** The RIHP&HC directory is a compilation of information about 2000 Rhode Islanders who care about the future of historic resources and whose actions are likely to have an impact on preservation progress in the state. The directory allows the RIHP&HC to maintain communication with archaeologists, architects, and other professional consultants; with members of the Rhode Island Alliance of Historic District Commissions; with the leadership of the Narragansett Indian tribe; with state government leaders and members of the state's congressional delegation; and with community planners and members of local historic district commissions. The directory also contains information about over 100 historical and preservation organizations. For every community and for the state as a whole, the directory allows quick identification of preservation and planning leadership and, since it is computerized, communication is facilitated. Maintaining the directory and assuring that the information contained within is as up-to-date as possible requires a substantial commitment of resources by the RIHP&HC; the Commission

needs to develop a mechanism for insuring that the directory is as up-to-date and useful as possible.

At present, the various databases at the RIHP&HC do not reference each other. Some cross-referencing now exists on paper but would be substantially more effective if the cross-referencing were electronic. Cross-referenced files should be regarded as an ideal at the RIHP&HC, though it is not anticipated that this goal will be achieved within the next five years.

One important category of information about historic resources is not now available at the RIHP&HC. The Commission is not able to identify for constituents whether an individual property is included in a local historic zoning district. The RIHP&HC does not, of course, administer local zoning, and property owners are now routinely referred to local officials to determine whether their property is included in a local zone. It would nonetheless be helpful to property owners to have the ability to provide that information at the Commission. The RIHP&HC should work toward the goal of identifying by street address and/or plat and lot numbers each property included within a local historic district zone; CLG grants may be a useful mechanism for acquiring the information.

***STRATEGIES:***

1. Work toward completion of data entry for the main data file; Create complete inventories for all historic districts included on the National Register.
2. Study and evaluate the inclusion of photographs in the main data file.
3. Develop a mechanism for consistent up-dating of the location of historic resources on the RIGIS system.
4. Develop a mechanism for consistent up-dating of the directory.
5. Consider adding to the main data file information about local historic district zoning.
6. Consider whether and how to cross-reference all of the RIHP&HC databases.

## **PART 140-9 USING, ALTERING, AND REPLACING THIS PLAN**

This amendment of the Rhode Island State Historical Preservation Plan is designed to carry the RIHP&HC through FFY2000.

As the Annual Work Program for the agency is prepared each year, this plan should be consulted to determine whether described tasks remain to be completed. As resources permit, tasks should be added to the work program.

This plan should be evaluated on an annual basis to determine if the conditions to which it responds have altered sufficiently to require alteration of the plan. This evaluation should be carried out by RIHP&HC staff and commissioners and by other Rhode Islanders who will be invited to participate in the process through the RIHP&HC newsletter and other vehicles. When soliciting suggestions for the annual work program each year, RIHP&HC staff should examine suggestions to determine whether they indicate that changes to the plan may be necessary. If conditions have changed to such a degree, the alteration and amendment of the plan should be undertaken. The process described in the Planning Process Document should be examined to determine whether the alteration and amendment of the plan should follow the same process. If not, another or modified process should be described and carried out.

The annual evaluation of this plan should include suggested or planned changes to its overall structure and components when replacement is due in FFY2000. The preparation of a new plan is scheduled for FFY1999.



## APPENDIX A

### AN OVERVIEW OF RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

In April 1524 Giovanni da Verrazano sailed into Narragansett Bay and dropped anchor near what is now Newport, Rhode Island. Verrazano's visit was the first recorded contact between Europeans and the Indians living around Narragansett Bay. His narratives describe Indian culture before European colonization altered Indian lifeways. Verrazano's two-week visit was a critical moment in Rhode Island's history. It began the process of European exploration and colonization that dramatically changed lands that had been Indian for more than 12,000 years.

The Indians that Verrazano described in 1524 were either Narragansett or Wampanoag. They were horticulturists, growing legumes and corn, supplementing this diet with hunting, fishing, and the gathering of nuts, berries, and other plants. Verrazano described extensive clearings and an open woodland uncluttered by today's common mixture of briars, poison ivy, and immature undergrowth. The landscape had been formed by generations of Indian people alternately burning, planting, and harvesting domestic and wild plants. Burning maintained the soil's fertility, and created open areas where blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries grew in abundance. The practice of moving fields and burning the growth created a mosaic of environments that provided browsing areas for deer and a diverse habitat for other animals used for food and clothing.

This horticultural way of life and rich estuarine environment described by Verrazano had emerged from thousands of years of cultural and environmental change. Indian people had lived in the area for at least 12,000 years prior to Verrazano's visit. Over these millennia substantial changes occurred in the physical environment and in the way Indian groups used the land. By 15,000 B.P. (before the present) the glacial ice sheet began to melt and retreat to the north, beginning the process of transformation from a colder, open spruce woodland environment to a warmer deciduous one. The release of glacial meltwater caused sea levels to rise, transforming a freshwater environment into a saltwater one. The modern estuarine environment was fully formed 3500 years ago. During most of this period Indians were hunter-gatherers, maintaining their livelihoods from riverine and estuarine resources. Between 2700 B.P. and A.D. 1200 domestic crops such as corn, beans, squash, and pumpkins were introduced from the south.

Archaeologists commonly divide the 12,000 years prior to Verrazano's visit into time periods that correspond to cultural and environmental changes. Our understanding of these years is only partially based upon data from Rhode Island. Archaeological sites dating from 5000-6000 B.P. are very rare in Rhode Island. Sites dating after 2,500 B.P., however, are more abundant. Data from these sites have made important contributions to understanding the history of Indians in southern New England.

## **PALEO-INDIAN PERIOD, 12,500-10,000 B.P.**

This period represents the earliest arrival of humans into the northeast following the retreat of the last glaciation. By 13,500 B.P. the southern extent of the ice front stood along the northern boundaries of Connecticut and Rhode Island, opening most of the state to colonization by tundra flora. The plant community provided food for animals such as caribou, mammoth, and mastodon so that by 12,500 B.P. the region could support small bands of Paleo-Indian people.

At this time, the land mass of southern New England was much more extensive and the landscape very different. Narragansett Bay was a system of freshwater rivers, with the coastline located 80 miles southeast of Providence. Block Island would not have been an island, but rather a high prominence on an otherwise level coastal plain.

The environment was changing rapidly. As the ice continued its northward retreat, more temperate plant communities were established and greater inundation of coastal areas occurred. By 12,000 B.P. tundra vegetation had given way to spruce, birch, jack pine, and red pine, and the large mammals such as mammoth and mastodon were replaced by elk and caribou.

The characteristic Paleo-Indian artifact was the fluted point, part of a tool kit designed to be quickly portable for hunting migratory animals. Paleo-Indians probably moved in small hunting bands that followed migratory animals, taking advantage of other wild foods along the way. Because the Paleo-Indian environment was changing rapidly, dependable fish runs, tidal mud flats, and other long-term predictable locations of food resources were unestablished. The Paleo-Indians adapted to this environment by living in small groups and following the moving herds of animals.

## **ARCHAIC PERIOD, 10,000-2,700 B.P.**

Broadly defined, the Archaic Period marks a change in environment, adaptation, and artifact styles. The period extends to the first use of clay-fired ceramics and is divided into four sub-periods corresponding to environmental and cultural changes.

### **EARLY ARCHAIC PERIOD, 10,000-8,000 B.P.**

During this period, plant communities became more complex. The deciduous forest moved north, and by 9,000 B.P. oak was established in Rhode Island. Sea levels were still rising, and had just begun to form Narragansett Bay. The environment was becoming more stable, diverse, and predictable, and the Indian subsistence base broadened to take advantage of these new conditions. With the decline of the migratory animals that had characterized the Paleo-Indian period, groups began to develop a stronger sense of territory and became more committed to their local environments. In fact, fewer exotic lithics, indicative of extensive regional exchange, occur at Early Archaic sites. Instead, greater use is made of local quartz and quartzite.

## **MIDDLE ARCHAIC PERIOD, 8,000-6,000 B.P.**

During this period the deciduous forest became well established. By 6,000 B.P. the 20 percent oak isopoll had moved into southern New Hampshire and Vermont, and southern New England was characterized by an oak-hemlock forest. Sea levels continued to rise. By 7,500 B.P. salt water had advanced into the lower West and Sakonnet Passages of the bay; by 6,250 B.P. the West Passage was nearly flooded, although much of the upper bay's western side and all of the Sakonnet River valley were still land.

The settlement system became more elaborate, the range of activities increased and sites became more specialized. Further evidence suggesting that the period represented an elaboration of the earlier tendency to focus on local resources is suggested by continued emphasis upon local stone materials.

## **LATE ARCHAIC PERIOD, 6,000-3,700 B.P.**

During this period essentially modern conditions for vegetation emerged and Narragansett Bay fully developed. Rates of sea level rise tapered off considerably from 17mm/yr. at 12,000 B.P. to less than 3mm/yr. by the end of the period. Although by 4,750 B.P. the west side of the upper Bay remained unflooded and Dutch Island was still attached to Conanicut Island, by 3,500 B.P. the salt water cove at the juncture of the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers had been formed.

Sites of this period reflect the mast forest environment and the stabilizing estuarine environment. Grinding implements indicate greater reliance on vegetable foods--seeds, nuts, berries, and roots. Deer was the major game animal. Fishing was important, with weirs established at prominent migratory locations. Toward the end of the period shellfish appear in coastal sites.

Sites occur in a variety of local environmental settings, and the local use of stone materials continues with little reliance on outside exotic lithics.

Mortuary sites are recorded for the first time, with cremation burials occurring just outside of Rhode Island in the Taunton River drainage at the Bear Swamp and Wampanucket sites.

## **TERMINAL ARCHAIC PERIOD, 3,700-2,700 B.P.**

This period is culturally dynamic, with regional population movement hypothesized, related either to population growth or migrations from the west.

Characteristic of this period are stone bowls shaped from steatite, known commonly as soapstone. While seasonality, and the use of coastal and interior resources continued to be an important factor in this period as in preceding periods, the use of these heavy cooking vessels

implies reduced mobility. Regionally, Rhode Island was an important soapstone production center, with quarries located in what is now Cranston, Johnston, and Providence. Soapstone was used for ceremonial and utilitarian purposes, and the material occurs as grave goods in cremation burials on Conanicut Island and in refuse middens throughout the state.

#### **WOODLAND PERIOD, 2,700 B.P.-A.D. 1524**

This period begins with the use of clay-fired ceramics. It is the period best documented by radio-carbon dating. Of the approximately fifty-five Rhode Island sites that have been radio-carbon dated, forty date to this period. Regionally, horticulture was adopted and domestic plants integrated into the hunting, gathering, and fishing subsistence base.

The extent of change in Indian land use prior to Verrazano's visit in 1524 is poorly understood, but the general strategy of seasonal movement from interior wintering areas to coastal summering areas and the use of domestic crops he observed had probably persisted for some time. Large nut storage pits at a site in North Kingstown dating to 2000 B.P. suggest a preadaptation to maize horticulture. The prominent place of corn, beans, and squash in seventeenth-century Narragansett mythology and calendrical ritual suggest a long, albeit undocumented, traditional involvement in maize cultivation. Thus far, the only documented use of maize in Rhode Island is from a Contact Period component at Fort Ninigret in Charlestown. In southern New England the earliest date is A.D. 1200, from Martha's Vineyard. The negative evidence for any early or widespread reliance on maize is large. Understanding the emergence of horticulture is a critical research question in this region.

In addition to probable changes in subsistence and economy with the emergence of horticulture, mortuary practices also change with the apparent abandonment of cremation burials in favor of multiple and single primary interments.

When Verrazano visited in 1524 he described an Indian land system based upon seasonal movement. Approximately 120 years later Roger Williams elaborated upon Verrazano's narrative, observing that Indian families would establish garden plots along the coast in the summer and come together in the winter in sheltered inland areas. Although seasonality was probably the basis of Indian land use since at least the Middle Archaic, what Williams and Verrazano described was not what existed throughout Indian history.

Apart from the emergence of horticulture after 2700 B.P., climatic variations may have affected the abundance of various plant and animal species that in turn could have altered subsistence and settlement practices. Marine temperatures, for example, have fluctuated, affecting the abundance of shellfish. After the Early Archaic, ocean temperatures began to warm until they became warmer than today at the end of the Terminal Archaic. Temperatures then began to cool, reaching a low point around A.D. 1000, after which the water warmed steadily to present levels. These fluctuations as well as variations in land temperatures and precipitation must have affected settlement strategies, perhaps even negating the need to "winter-over" during the Terminal Archaic. An understanding of this basic but complex and changing relationship between environment and culture through millennia of Indian history is fundamental. The

history of Indians is sometimes written as if the emergence of horticulture were inevitable--an ultimate goal that was achieved after thousands of years of experimentation, diversification, and climatic amelioration. Such was not the case. In fact, for many cultures the introduction of maize, beans, and squash led to increased disease and lower nutrition levels. Given the bountiful resources of the Narragansett Bay Basin, the Indians of southern New England may not have relied heavily on domestic crops. Evidence from North Kingstown of large storage facilities for wild foods around 2000 B.P. shows a technological capability to store large quantities of food. The move to horticulture would have been a minor and perhaps reversible technological step.

## **EUROPEAN DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION, 1524-1636**

This period begins with Verrazano's written observations of his exploration of Narragansett Bay and ends with Roger Williams' settlement at Moshassuck [Providence] in 1636. This is the period when the first substantial effects of European contact were felt by New England Indian tribes: disease, the beginnings of land encroachment, and the resultant ecological and cultural alteration of the land. Indians living around Narragansett Bay, the Wampanoags and Narragansett, were little affected by the Europeans until 1616, when a severe epidemic decimated Indians living along the coast from Maine to Cape Cod. Although the Narragansetts were physically unaffected by the epidemic, the catastrophe stimulated an intensification of their religious practices and increased their power and influence throughout the region. Thus, the initial effects of European contact increased the power and prestige of Rhode Island's Indian population.

After 1620, European settlers increasingly influenced Indian culture and drew Native Americans into aspects of their socioeconomic system. One illustration of this is the way that European commercial practices modified the status and use of wampum, cylindrical shell beads made from quahog and whelk. Wampum was rare and exceedingly valuable outside the coastal Indian settlements. The Europeans noted its value and transformed the cylindrical shell beads from a purely ceremonial to a secular commodity, using the wampum produced in southern New England as a form of currency to purchase furs from interior Indian groups. With the burgeoning demand for wampum, local Indians were induced to produce the beads for Europeans; concurrently, wampum fueled the Atlantic fur trade and helped to promote and sustain the success of early European traders and colonists.

## **EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, EXPANSION, AND INDUSTRIALIZATION, 1636-PRESENT**

Rhode Island Indians began to feel serious and irreversible effects of European colonization in the 1630s. The Narragansett sachem Miantonomi's 1641 oration to the Montauk Indians of eastern Long Island urged Indians to unite against the colonists and recalled the less stressful, more bountiful days prior to European colonization. Miantonomi noted in particular the loss of Indian lands and the transformation of the landscape from one which supported Indian horticulture to one that could not. The United Colonies arranged to have Miantonomi killed shortly after making that speech. The older sachem, Canonicus, also died in the 1640s. The loss of both sachems and subsequent ascendancy of several sachems marked an apparent splintering

of tribal leadership and a breakdown in the long-standing practice of rule by dual sachems. The proliferation of sachems following the deaths of Miantonomi and Canonicus was encouraged by colonial trading and land acquisition activities, and it reduced the ability of the tribe to reach consensus on matters of land sale, colonial trade relations, and intertribal affairs. Moreover, Narragansett males were involved in a variety of tasks that were tied to the colonial economy: they produced wampum, carried messages to Plymouth, tended colonial cattle, and built stone walls for colonial settlers.

While the relationship between Narragansetts and colonial Rhode Islanders was sometimes mutually advantageous, it was predominantly tense and fragile. The relationship began to deteriorate in the 1650s, finally collapsing with the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675. The Narragansetts attempted to stay out of the conflict, but were invaded by the United Colonies under the pretext of forcing the Indian sachems to return Wampanoag war refugees. The United Colonies militarily defeated the Narragansett Indians in 1676. Surviving Indians were sold into slavery, moved west, or settled with the Niantic, who had remained neutral during the war.

Following King Philip's War, the Narragansett lands were settled, and the formation of Rhode Island towns proceeded. Most towns began as agricultural settlements based on subsistence family farms. Within a few years, many farms were able to produce a surplus which could be sold, and in the southern part of the state some large commercial farms were established with labor supplied by Indian and African slaves. Merchants exported the agricultural products of the hinterland in the initial phase of development of a complex maritime trading network. Rhode Island's access to the ocean was unsurpassed among the New England colonies, and contributed to the rise of maritime trade. By 1774, twenty-nine towns had been established, of which two-thirds bordered Narragansett Bay or Block Island Sound. The importance of the bay is reflected in the establishment of numerous coastal fortifications, lighthouses, and life-saving stations in Rhode Island.

Maritime commerce developed in the eighteenth century, led by Newport and Providence and supported by smaller coastal and interior towns. Among the mainstays of shipping were the coastal carrying trade--which transported local produce from port to port along the Atlantic seaboard--and the so-called West Indies "triangle" trade. The staple West Indian products of sugar and molasses were brought to Rhode Island to be converted into rum at shore-side distilleries. The rum was shipped to the coast of Africa where it was traded for slaves, who in turn were shipped to the West Indies to work on the sugar plantations. Other important maritime activities included ship building and the manufacture for export of lime, iron goods, and spermaceti candles. The single most lucrative form of commerce involved the importation of manufactured goods from England and Europe, but this also required the greatest investment in ships, warehousing, and cargoes. Thus, this type of trade was generally carried on in conjunction with the coastal or triangle routes.

The Revolutionary War altered trade patterns and reduced the socioeconomic supremacy of Newport in Rhode Island. Providence, however, emerged with its ships, fortunes, and merchant fleet intact. Profitable trade was conducted with China, South America, the West

Indies, and Europe. Rhode Islanders exported local provisions to South America; they sent Oriental tea and textiles and South American rum, tobacco, and coffee to Europe; they traded Iberian specie to China; and they imported European manufactures, Baltic naval stores and iron, and Oriental goods for domestic consumption. Smaller ports also prospered in trade and fishing, including Bristol, Warren, East Greenwich, and Wickford.

Capital accumulated through maritime commerce facilitated the state's industrialization. At the same time that maritime prosperity was reaching its height in the late 1780s and the 1790s, merchant Moses Brown organized a company to manufacture cotton textiles in Pawtucket. Under the direction of Samuel Slater, water-powered factory spinning of cotton yarn commenced on December 20, 1790, and the American Industrial Revolution began.

During the first decade of the nineteenth century other merchants began to divert funds from maritime to industrial enterprises. Roads and turnpikes were laid out, facilitating the movement of goods between hinterland and port and also providing access to water-power sites in the interior. During the early nineteenth century, mills were established throughout the Blackstone and Pawtuxet River Valleys and along many of the state's other waterways. This industrialization had its roots in maritime commerce. Rhode Island merchants provided the capital, managerial ability, and transportation and marketing services which were fundamental to the industrialization of much of the state. Cheap, efficient transportation and the development of steam-powered factories were crucial to the growth of manufacturing. The introduction of railroads and steam engines released mills from their dependence on water-power sites and increased their manufacturing capacity. Large steam-powered mills were established in Blackstone and Pawtuxet River Valley communities as well as in areas that lacked good hydraulic power, such as Bristol, Newport, and Providence.

The Civil War triggered a full-scale expansion of established manufacturers nationwide. Base-metal industries in Providence and elsewhere earned profits producing rifles, steam engines, and machinery. At the same time, the war provided incentives for the rapid expansion and mechanization of industries which had developed at a slower pace before 1860. The textile industry was one of these. During the Civil War, cotton was in short supply, and some mills were forced to close, though cotton production remained an important part of the state's economy. However, wool was available and woolen goods were in great demand, and the Atlantic Delaine, Riverside, and Wanskuck Mills were three of the more prominent woolen or worsted manufactories established during or immediately after the war.

Industrialization modified the state's landscape and dramatically altered social and economic life. Some interior towns, such as Lincoln, North Smithfield, and Burrillville, were transformed from rural areas dominated by the family farm into amalgamations of manufacturing villages. The railroad and the steam engine opened up these interior areas to industrialization and the textile industry became dominant. Before industrialization, the common unit of settlement in these towns had been the family farm, connected to coastal markets by poorly constructed roads. By the end of the nineteenth century, the countryside was dotted with mill villages, and most Rhode Island residents no longer worked the land, but instead worked in factories.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Rhode Island became home to immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, French Canada, Italy, and many other countries. Generally finding work in mills or factories, the newcomers brought their religion, language, and culture to the towns or neighborhoods they settled. The history of many ethnic groups may be traced in the surviving churches, social halls, and houses in the communities inhabited by these immigrants.

During the twentieth century, the center of the nation's textile industry moved from the northeast to the south. As early as the 1890s Rhode Island businessmen were aware of southern gains in the textile industry; indeed, Rhode Islanders were among the important investors in southern mills. The firm of Providence millwright Frank P. Sheldon designed dozens of southern mills. In 1880 the south produced only 1/16 of the nation's cotton goods; by 1910 it was producing almost a third; and by 1923 nearly half. A variety of causes has been suggested for New England's decline as a textile manufacturing center, including climate, antiquated physical plants, and labor problems, all of which undoubtedly played a part. New England cotton profits declined alarmingly in the years 1910-14, but the stimulus to production created by World War I helped to hide the seriousness of these problems until plants actually began to close. The bankruptcy of the firm of B. B. & R. Knight (originators of the famous "Fruit of the Loom" label) in 1924 and the abandonment by the American Woolen Company of two Providence mills in 1928 dramatized the condition of Rhode Island's textile economy.

The depression of the 1930s exacerbated the poor condition of the state's economy, with cutbacks, closings, and shutdowns of factories widespread and frequent. World War II invigorated the economy somewhat. The war effort led to the renovation of old fortifications and the construction of new facilities such as the Quonset Point Naval Air Station. These military installations, concentrated around Narragansett Bay and on the Bay Islands, remain as a legacy of this era.

Since 1945, suburbanization has increasingly affected Rhode Island's physical development and demographic evolution. Urban core areas have lost population as families left the cities, encouraged in their migration to the suburbs by the construction of new highways and the upgrading of old roads. Since the 1960s, people have begun to move back to urban areas, revitalizing old and decaying neighborhoods. New service industries, offices, and residential units occupy old factory buildings in some rejuvenated areas, providing tangible continuity with the state's history.



## **APPENDIX B**

### **HOW THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED**

This revision of the State Historical Preservation Plan was prepared by the staff of the RIHP&HC. The assistance and input of others was sought and used as appropriate and necessary, but RIHP&HC conducted the study, revision, and writing of the plan.

### **EXTENT OF REVISION**

This revision of the RISHPP does not represent a wholesale reconfiguration of the RIHP&HC planning process. The prior plan demonstrated over the course of two decades that it had provided a useful and efficient method of organizing information about historic resources. As part of the creation of this plan, other planning processes were examined and evaluated--none appeared to justify by improved efficiency or effectiveness a major change in the way data is organized by the RIHP&HC nor the process by which goals and priorities are established.

### **REVISING THE PLAN AND PREPARING AMENDMENTS**

The staff of the RIHP&HC carried out the several tasks identified in the Planning Process Document in the preparation of this plan: the status of the state's historic resources was assessed; the effects of current and forecasted trends in the state's development were assessed; major preservation issues, threats, and opportunities were identified; goals and objectives which address identified issues, threats, and opportunities were identified and prioritized; implementation strategies were designed to achieve the highest priority goals and objectives; the plan was written, reviewed, and revised.

### **SOURCES OF DATA USED IN REVISING THE PLAN**

Several categories of data were used in preparing these amendments to the RISHPP, including information about historic resources, information about constituents of historical preservation, information from constituents of historical preservation, information about progress in preservation planning by individual communities, and information about long-term economic, demographic, and social trends. Each of these sources is noted here; all are described more fully in the Planning Process Document.

Sources of information about historic resources included the RIHP&HC's planning file, the building survey file, the archaeological survey file, archaeological survey maps, National Register file, grant file, loan file, easement file, and federal and state tax incentive files.

The principal sources of information about constituents of historical preservation in Rhode Island is a computerized directory which compiles information about 2000 Rhode Islanders who care about the future of historic resources in the state.

Sources of information from constituents of historical preservation include a public information survey conducted in preparation for the preparation of this plan, including an external and internal communications audit, using personal interviews, focus groups, phone interviews, and mail questionnaires. In addition, the RIHP&HC regularly polls attendees at the state's annual preservation conference concerning their understanding of the most important challenges and opportunities facing historical preservation in Rhode Island. In FFY94 this polling was supplemented by the mailing and distribution of questionnaires to 1500 individuals and groups specifically targeted for consultation in the planning process. All responses are on file at the RIHP&HC.

Information about preservation progress in Rhode Island's communities was sought from the planning file, the planning log, and a series of summaries of preservation elements of community comprehensive plans. Long-term trends which appear to have an impact on historical preservation were identified with the assistance of documents from the state's Departments of Administration and Economic Development.

## **PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

As part of the process of developing these revisions to the RISHPP, the RIHP&HC consulted with the many individuals and groups who will use the plan, who have an interest in historical preservation, who have information about historic resources, or whose actions will affect the future of historic resources. The RIHP&HC's planning process solicits and incorporates the needs, concerns, and views of these groups and individuals. Among the groups whose opinions were solicited and used in the preparation of this plan were the RIHP&HC staff; RIHP&HC commissioners; owners of historic properties and their agents (realtors, architects, and contractors); preservation, planning, and archaeology professionals and academics; local governments officials; local historic district commissioners; historical and preservation organizations; state and federal officials; the Narragansett Indian tribe; and minority groups and the disabled.

## **REVIEW BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

The Rhode Island State Historical Preservation Plan has been prepared, written, and reviewed by the staff of the RIHP&HC. It was reviewed by the RIHP&HC commissioners, who authorized its review by the National Park Service and by others who have an interest in the plan. After further revisions in response to comments from the RIHP&HC's constituents, this plan was formally adopted by the RIHP&HC commissioners.

## APPENDIX C

### CONTEXTS AND PROPERTY TYPES FOR ORGANIZING DATA ABOUT RHODE ISLAND'S RESOURCES

#### CONTEXTS

Paleo/Early-Middle Archaic (pre-5000BP, statewide)

The Islands

The Salt Ponds Region

The Bay Coastal Area

The Near Interior

The Upland Interior

Historic Shipwrecks

State-Owned Properties

Barrington

Block Island

Bristol

Burrillville

Central Falls

Charlestown

Coventry

Cranston

also: Pawtuxet Village

Cumberland

East Greenwich

East Providence

Exeter

Foster

Glocester

Jamestown

Johnston

Lincoln

Little Compton

Middletown

Narragansett

also: Narragansett Pier

Newport

Kay-Catherine-Old Beach Road Neighborhood

Southern Thames Street Neighborhood

West Broadway Neighborhood

North Kingstown

North Providence

North Smithfield

Pawtucket

Portsmouth  
Providence

also: Downtown  
East Side  
Elmwood  
Industrial Sites  
Smith Hill  
South Providence  
West Side

Richmond

Scituate

Smithfield

South Kingstown

Tiverton

Warren

Warwick

also: Pawtuxet Village

West Greenwich

West Warwick

Westerly

Woonsocket

## **PROPERTY TYPES**

Agricultural Buildings and Complexes  
Collective Residential Buildings  
Commercial Buildings  
Educational Buildings and Complexes  
Engineering Structures and Sites  
Government Buildings  
Houses  
Industrial Buildings  
Landscapes  
Marine Resources  
Military Buildings and Installations  
Modification Facilities (prisons, hospitals)  
Monuments  
Places of Assembly  
Planned Residential Neighborhoods  
Recreation Buildings  
Religious Buildings  
Summer Colonies  
Transportation Resources  
Villages

The Division of Planning, Rhode Island Department of Administration, is established by Chapter 42-11 of the *General Laws* as the central planning agency for state government. The work of the Division is guided by the State Planning Council, comprised of state, local, and public representatives and federal and other advisors.

The objectives of the Division are: (1) to prepare strategic and systems plans for the state; (2) to coordinate activities of the public and private sectors within this framework of policies and programs; (3) to assist local governments in management, finance, and planning; and (4) to advise the Governor and others concerned on physical, social, and economic topics.

Activities of the Division are supported by state appropriations and federal grants. The contents of this report reflect the views of the sponsoring state agencies, who are responsible for the accuracy of the facts and data presented herein. This may be reprinted, in part or full, with the customary crediting of the source.

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Cover:

Gilbert Stuart Birthplace, North Kingstown (built 1753; restored 1927). From the collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society Library, RHi (X3) 2369, engraving from Welcome Arnold Greene, *Providence Plantations for 250 Years* (Providence, 1886), p. 423. Courtesy of the Rhode Island Historical Society.