



May 2023

## It's "No Mow" May!

No-Mow May is a growing movement to encourage people to refrain from mowing their lawns for the month of May. This simple act allows clover and other flowers to bloom, as a way of providing food for pollinators. Dandelions and clover (which many of us think of as "weeds") in your lawn are actually wildflowers and can provide a feast for pollinators, tackle pollution, and lock away carbon below ground.

As of 2015, grass was the single largest irrigated "crop" in America, surpassing corn and wheat; it uses a staggering nine billion gallons of water per year. The benefits of not cutting the lawn include providing enough important nectar for ten times more bees and other pollinators from the flowering species that are found on our lawns. According to Plantlife, just eight dandelion flowers produce enough nectar sugar to meet an adult bumblebee's baseline energy needs. The USDA says that honey bees are America's primary pollinator: more than one hundred U.S.-grown crops rely on honey bees and other pollinators including birds, moths, butterflies and other insects.

Not mowing for a month saves water while increasing drought tolerance, as taller grass tends to have deeper roots and less water evaporates from the soil.

pollution from gas-powered lawn equipment.

Posters and signs are available to print at home to let your neighbors know that you're not just forgetting to cut your grass!

Other simple actions you can take to provide food and habitat to pollinators include:

- Avoid or limit the use of pesticides and lawn care chemicals: learn to tolerate some weeds.
- Plant a pollinator garden that includes native Rhode Island species.
- Provide nesting places or bee houses for solitary bees to increase the pollination of your garden plants.
- Replace thirsty turf grass with lawn alternatives like fescue, creeping thyme, or clover.
- Review your local ordinances and advocate for reforms to allow for more pollinator-friendly yards.

Less mowing will also reduce air and noise



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## Comprehensive Plan Approved



At the State Planning Council's April meeting, the Council recognized the Town of Portsmouth for Statewide Planning's approval of their Comprehensive Plan. Retired Town Planner Gary Crosby accepted the award on behalf of Town Planner Lea Hitchen and Assistant Town Planner Aaron Lindo, who could not be present. Gary noted that he will continue working with

the Planning Department to help with implementation of certain action items in the Plan. Congratulations to Portsmouth on their achievement and to Gary on his well-deserved retirement!

The full Portsmouth Comprehensive Plan can be viewed on our website, [www.planning.ri.gov](http://www.planning.ri.gov).

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## Municipal Board Education Syllabus is Available

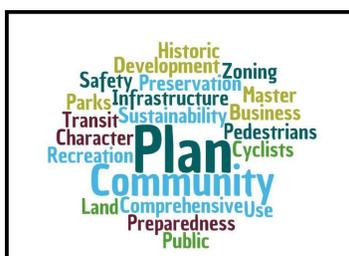
The new municipal education syllabus and schedule have been released by Statewide Planning to help municipal boards and commissions meet the requirements of R.I. General Law 45-70-3, which requires that *all* municipal planning, zoning, and historic district boards or commission members complete an education program in land use law and planning.



If you want your boards and commissions to attend a virtual training, please contact Nancy Hess, Interdepartmental Project Manager, at [Nancy.Hess@doa.ri.gov](mailto:Nancy.Hess@doa.ri.gov) or Paul Gonsalves, Principal Planner, at [Paul.Gonsalves@doa.ri.gov](mailto:Paul.Gonsalves@doa.ri.gov) for more information and to register.

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## Comment on our Draft UPWP



Statewide Planning has released our draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for fiscal year 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024). It is available on our SmartComment portal for review and comments.

What is a UPWP? It's our annual statement of work identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area-- in our case, Rhode Island. A UPWP includes a description of our planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work (including our partner agencies), time frames for completing it, cost, and the

source(s) of funds. Metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like Statewide Planning are required by the federal government to develop UPWPs to govern work programs for spending our annual allocation of planning funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

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## Newport Wins National Planning Award

The RI Division of Statewide Planning is pleased to share that the Newport North End Urban Plan has been recognized by the American Planning Association - Economic Division with the Donald Hunter Excellence in Economic Development Planning Award for 2023 as the best economic development planning project in the United States! The Award was presented to the City of Newport at the awards ceremony at the recent National Planning Conference in Philadelphia, along with co-recipient NBBJ Design, the City's consultant on the project. Great job, folks!



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## Upcoming Statewide Planning Meetings

*All meetings are open to the public.*

### State Planning Council

**May 11 - 9AM**

Room 2A, 1 Capitol Hill, Providence

### Water Resources Board

**May 19 - 9 AM**

Rm 300, 235 Promenade, Providence

### Transportation Advisory Committee

**May 25 - 5:30PM**

Rm 300, 235 Promenade, Providence

### Technical Committee

**June 2 - 2:30PM**

Location: Cranston Central Library  
140 Sockanosset Cross Rd.

### PHOTO TRIVIA

Where in Rhode Island can you find these buildings?



See the answer at the bottom of the newsletter!

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## Events

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

**May 1- May 31 RI Historical Cemeteries Awareness and Preservation Weeks** Learn about Rhode Island's historic cemeteries and burial grounds by participating in clean-ups, tours, and conservation workshops. All events are free and open to the public.

**May 1 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Information for Decision Making** Join a discussion on the needs of decision makers and the tools available in the public, private, and

research sectors at urban scales to aid local decision making. Time: 11AM-4PM. Free.

**May 2 [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Program: Implementation Grants.](#)** This webinar will offer an overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process, focusing on applying for Implementation Grants. Time: 1:30PM-3PM. Free.

**May 2 [Promoting Complete Street Policies with Traffic Signal Timing Practices](#)** Webinar will explain specific recommendations regarding needed changes to signal timing tools, guidance documents, and research initiatives. Time: 3PM-4:30PM. Fee: \$79.

**May 3 [Barriers & Facilitators of People with Disabilities in Accepting Autonomous Shared Mobility Services.](#)** The autonomous shuttle offers opportunities to increase community mobility options for people with disabilities. Time: 12PM. Free.

**May 3 [CDBG Application Workshop](#)** The RI Department of Housing will discuss available funding, program requirements, timeline, and other topics. Time: 9:30AM. Location: Narragansett Room, 315 Iron Horse Way, Providence. For those planning to attend in person, please RSVP to [Christina.Costa@housing.ri.gov](mailto:Christina.Costa@housing.ri.gov)

**May 3 [Evaluating Tradeoffs and Opportunities to Forest Carbon Management.](#)** Explore potential tradeoffs and opportunities in relation to managing for forest carbon and carbon management strategies to account for long-term ecosystem resilience. Time: 3PM-4PM. Free.

**May 3 [Local Road Technical Assistance.](#)** Learn how local agencies and municipalities continue to benefit from the Federal Highway Administration's roadway safety technical assistance. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free.

**May 4 [Autonomous Vehicles for Small Towns: System, Service, and Safety from Research to Practice.](#)** AV technology can become a mobility option for older adults or persons with disabilities, while also reducing the cost of transportation for both individuals and municipalities. Time: 2PM. Free.

**May 4 [Energy Facility Siting Board public hearing](#)** on the proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) vaporization facility on Old Mill Lane in Portsmouth, RI. Time: 6PM. Location: RI Public Utilities Commission, Hearing Room A, 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick.

**May 4 [Fighting Defensiveness in Equity Conversations.](#)** This workshop will help you understand the real reasons why diversity initiatives provoke opposition and learn effective responses to equity and inclusion. Time: 2PM. Free, but you must register.

**May 4 [How to Take Advantage of Carbon Reduction Funds for Active Transportation.](#)** Learn how Florida is strategically using their Carbon Reduction Program federal formula funds for active transportation. Time: 1PM-2PM. Free.

**May 4 [Unlocking Federal Funding: Free New Tools to Help You Get Federal Funding for Transportation Tech.](#)** Webinar will explore how you can unlock the IIJA and IRA with "Fund Navigator," federal funding requirements, and how to advance Justice 40 equity goals. Time: 2PM. Free.

**May 5- 7 [Jane's Walk Providence 2023.](#)** Explore Providence's neighborhoods on foot during Jane's Walk, a global weekend festival of walking conversations inspired by urban activist Jane Jacobs. Free.

Walks include:

- Providence's Broad Street: North and South

- A Slice of Elmwood: Neighbors Talking to Neighbors
- Transportation in the City Center: Past, Present, and Future
- The Downtown Providence Park Network: Reimagining the Heart of the City

**May 8 [Key Capabilities for Cyber Resiliency](#)** You may already have cybersecurity controls and disaster recovery plans in place: what more can you do? Join a panel of data protection experts to learn how government can build cyber resiliency. Time: 1PM. Free.

**May 10 [Speed: One of America's Most Dangerous Driving Behaviors](#)** Join the RIDOT Office on Highway Safety to learn about the data, science, and what is being done to eliminate speeding on our roadways. Time: 12PM-1PM. Free.

**May 11 [Bringing the Safe System Approach to Local Safety Planning](#)** Webinar will provide timely information for local jurisdictions applying for funding for or starting to develop their own Safe System-based local safety plans. Time: 2PM-3PM. Fee: \$79.

**May 11 [Building a Comprehensive Count Program in Your Park or on Your Trails](#)** This webinar will examine real-world count data and discuss the logistics and best practices behind building robust count programs at multiple scales. Time: 1PM. Free.

**May 12 [Let's Level Up our Community Engagement Game](#)** Framework for deciding how to conduct public engagement and know what you are (and are not) promising the public. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

**May 13 [All Politics Are Local: Understanding Local Government in Rhode Island](#)** Join Common Cause RI to hear from experts on RI municipal government and how to make a difference in your community. Time: 10AM-11:30AM. Location: Cranston Central Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Rd. Free.

**May 16 [Spring NEARC Conference](#)** One-day conference with professional development for all levels of GIS users. Location: URI's Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences, 120 Flagg Rd., Kingston. Time: 8:30AM-5PM. Fee: \$75. Student discount is available.

**May 16- 19 [Transportation Equity Training II: An Accessibility Perspective](#)** Virtual Transportation Equity Training for practitioners and policymakers will provide an opportunity to collaborate in interactive exercises. Time: 8AM-11AM. Fee: \$550.

**May 18 [Collecting and Analyzing Pedestrian Behaviors at Intersections](#)** Hear about collecting pedestrian crossing behaviors at signalized intersections and how to use this data, along with vehicular data, to develop a more effective multimodal signal control system. Time: 2PM. Free. 1CM.

**May 18 [Informing the Trail Experience: The Process of Signing a Trail](#)** Webinar emphasizes learning about the trail, how to determine what needs to be communicated, and where information is best posted. Time: 1PM. Free.

**May 19 [Preservation: An Effective Planning Tool](#)** Hear how creative application of preservation policies and programs can address issues such as climate change, affordable housing and density, and equity. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

**May 19 [RI Planners' Spring Happy Hour](#)** The weather is getting warmer: gather with planning friends to catch up! Food and drinks will be available for purchase. No need to RSVP: just show up! Time: 5:15PM. Location: The Guild PVD Beer Garden at the Providence Pedestrian Bridge.

**May 25 [Integrating Micromobility with Transit and Other Modes.](#)** Learn how micromobility options may be integrated in transportation plans at different scales to reduce barriers to mobility access and transportation energy use. Time: 3PM. Free.

**May 25 [RIFMA Conference Flooding, Public Perspective, and Disaster Reform.](#)** As flooding intensifies, public perception shifts and drives policy change. Location: URI's Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences, 120 Flagg Rd., Kingston. Time: 8AM-4PM. Fee: \$110-\$150. Student discount is available.

**May 25 [Municipal Stormwater Maintenance.](#)** This workshop will describe how the Town of North Kingstown inspects, monitors and maintains stormwater infrastructure. Time: 8:30AM – 11:30AM. Location: North Kingstown Town Hall, 100 Fairway Dr. Free.

**May 31 [3rd Annual Summit of the U.S. EPA and New England State Water and Wastewater Leaders.](#)** EBC virtual conference will provide an opportunity for the EPA and each state to review their program priorities and strategies. Time: 9AM-12PM. Fee: \$30-\$140.

**June 2 [Planners' Roundtable Discussion: 2023 Legislation.](#)** Join planners from around RI to discuss the many bills introduced by the General Assembly this session and the impacts on local planners. Time: 2:30PM. Location: Cranston Central Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Rd. Free. Sponsored by RI Statewide Planning and APA-RI.

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## Grant Deadlines

**May 1 [Institute on Rural Design](#)** technical assistance for building design capacity in rural communities to plan revitalization strategies and introduce creative placemaking, arts, culture, and design for economic development in rural America.

**May 2 [Farmers Market Promotion Program](#)** funds projects that develop, coordinate and expand direct producer-to-consumer markets to help increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.

**May 2 [Local Food Promotion Program](#)** funds projects that develop, coordinate and expand local and regional food business enterprises that engage as intermediaries in indirect producer to consumer marketing.

**May 3 [Hart Family Fund for Small Towns](#)** grant program is intended to encourage preservation and stimulate public discussion by providing seed money for preservation projects in towns with populations of 10,000 or less.

**May 3 [National Archives grant opportunities](#),** including Major Collaborative Archival Initiatives, Archives Collaboratives, and Publishing Historical Records in Collaborative Digital Editions.

**May 5 [Coastal Watersheds Grant](#)** projects must address: algae blooms; flooding/coastal erosion due to sea level rise/changing precipitation; salt marsh, seagrass, or wetland degradation/loss; impacts of warmer water on coastal ecosystems; or contaminants.

**May 12 [RI Efficient Buildings Fund](#)** is a revolving loan fund. Low-interest loans are given to governmental entities for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects where the annual energy savings achieved by the project exceeds the annual debt service.

**May 16** [National Endowment for the Humanities' grants](#) deadline for: Cultural & Community Resilience; Climate Smart Humanities Organizations ; Preservation & Access Research & Training; and Infrastructure & Capacity Building Challenge Grants.

**May 19** [USDA Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program](#) funds projects that address sanitary, phytosanitary, and technical barriers that prohibit or threaten the export of U.S. specialty crops.

**May 25** [EPA's Healthy Communities Grant Program for New England](#) works directly with communities to combine available resources and best identify projects that will achieve measurable environmental and public health results.

**May 30** [Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program](#) is a new grant program to deploy publicly accessible electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling infrastructure in the places people live and work, urban and rural areas alike.

**May 31** [Municipal Resilience Program \(MRP\)](#) deadline. The MRP helps RI cities and towns undertake a workshop process that brings together climate information and local knowledge to identify top hazards, current challenges, and community strengths.

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## Articles of Interest

[Why cities are rethinking the kinds of trees they're planting](#)

[Family takes town to court over plan for horses](#)

[Volunteers energize development of Westcott Park](#)

[Riverfront renewal project aims to improve Main Street](#)

[The effects of zoning changes on housing supply are significant, but very small](#)

[RI town considers mandating new affordable housing](#)

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## RI Statewide Planning Staff

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

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## Photo Trivia Answer

**WEST WARWICK**

**Royal Mills (1890)**

(Photo: The Architectural Team website)

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