



December 2023/January 2024

## Planners' Roundtable: Today!

There will be a roundtable discussion for municipal planners today, **Friday, December 1, from 2:30PM-4PM** at the Warwick Public Library, 600 Sandy Lane. You can also join the meeting [via Zoom](#).



Join other Rhode Island planners for a discussion about the ordinance and regulation changes needed as a result of bills passed by the General Assembly in 2023. Hear how other planners are handling these issues and bring your questions and suggestions. There is no need to RSVP.

Planners' Happy Hour will follow the meeting at Tavern 12 at 2299 Post Road in Warwick from 4:30PM-6:30PM. Even if you cannot attend the meeting, stop by some socializing with fellow planners!

This event is co-sponsored by the [RI Division of Statewide Planning](#) and the [Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association](#).

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## Our Year in Review



It was a busy and productive year for the staff at Statewide Planning. Here are some highlights:

- Continued to work with the East Bay communities of Barrington, Warren, and Bristol on a resiliency plan for Route 114 as part of our [Municipal Technical Assistance Program](#);
- Partnered with the RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and the RI Resources Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) to begin drafting a request for *Action Strategy*;
- Contracted with [Streetlight](#) to obtain bicycle and pedestrian data sets to assist with transportation planning efforts;
- Reviewed guidance for RI [Commerce's TOD Pilot Program](#) regulations and [RI Housing's Municipal Technical Assistance Program](#);
- Met with thirty-six RI municipal planning directors and town planners to discuss the top issues in their community and how our office can provide assistance;
- Completed our [2023 Title VI Report](#), as well as biannual Disadvantaged

- proposals for an updated Solid Waste Management State Guide Plan element;
- Continued development of a Social Equity Platform using federal data sets and ArcGIS Online to develop a mapping framework;
- Completed five amendments to the 2022-2031 STIP to assist projects sponsored by the RI Department of Transportation (RIDOT), RI Public Transit Authority (RIPTA), and RI Turnpike and Bridge Authority (RITBA) to progress;
- Worked with ESRI to migrate the E-STIP to a new Experience Builder platform;
- Chose a consultant for the Rhode Island Complete Streets Plan;
- Served on multiple National Cooperative Highway Research Program Transportation Research Board (TRB) project panels, the Eastern Transportation Coalition (TETC) working groups, American Planning Association's (APA) Advisory Committee for solar energy siting, and the Board of the RI Chapter of the APA;
- Continued background research and work on *RI Land Use 2050*;
- Monitored 2023 legislation that impacted local, regional, and statewide planning, with scanning and tracking of 140 planning-related bills;
- Trained 178 community board members from twenty-five communities as part of the municipal educational program;
- Began work on the 2045 *Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)* update, including interagency coordination and data collection;
- Served on steering committees and working groups for numerous plans, such as the RI Emergency Management Agency's (RIEMA) *Hazard Mitigation Plan*, the RIDOT *Resilience Improvement Plan* and Carbon Reduction Strategy, the National Grid Northeast Medium-Heavy Duty Electric Highways Study, the RI

- Business Enterprise (DBE) Uniform Reporting;
- Completed a draft limited update of the Public Participation Plan, to be finalized in the first half of 2024;
- Attended (and presented at) numerous conferences, including the TRB, the Southern New England Conference of the American Planning Association (SNEAPA), the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), the Northeast Arc Users Group (NEARC), and the National State Geographic Information Council;
- Conducted State Guide Plan consistency reviews for numerous local comprehensive plan draft updates and amendments;
- Began work with the City of East Providence on a bicycle and pedestrian plan;
- Partnered with RI Commerce on a new draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Ocean State Accelerates, and an accompanying dashboard to track progress on the plan's action items;
- Provided GIS mapping and data support to other state agencies and municipalities;
- Hired a Supervising GIS Specialist, a Supervising Planner for transportation, and a Principal Planner for transportation;
- Held four Planners' Roundtable Discussions to provide a forum for municipal planners to learn about impactful changes to legislation and share ideas with their peers;
- Continued to work with the Office of Energy Resources to provide technical planning assistance to municipalities on grid resiliency/capacity and storage;
- Provided RI planners and others with planning news, information, grant opportunities, events, and articles via our (mostly) monthly *Plan RI* newsletter;

### **And much more!**

We look forward to continuing our work

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## Resiliency Technical Assistance Winner Announced



Statewide Planning recently launched our "Planning for a Resilient Community" Municipal Technical Assistance program, seeking applications from municipalities interested in a review of their bylaws, policies, and incentives that address land use, infrastructure, open space, stormwater, and flooding to assess their effectiveness in addressing resilience

against the effects of climate change.

We are pleased to announce that the Town of Cumberland has been chosen to receive the 2023 Resiliency Technical Assistance award. Cumberland Planning Director Glenn Modica says, "Cumberland is in the process of updating our *Hazard Mitigation Plan*, so we're very excited at the opportunity for the ordinance review to promote sustainable development and protect our natural resources."

This review will improve resilience to climate change and help reduce impacts to public infrastructure, private property, natural resources, and safety. As part of the award, regulation changes will be recommended and new regulations will be developed.

For more information on this program, please contact [Caitlin Greeley](#), Principal Planner.

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## Statewide Planning Meetings

*All meetings are open to the public.*

### Technical Committee/ Planners' Roundtable Discussion

**December 1- 2:30PM**

Warwick Public Library  
600 Sandy Lane

### Water Resources Board

**January 17 - 9AM**

Room 2A, Powers Building  
1 Capitol Hill, Providence

### State Planning Council

**December 14, January 11 - 9AM**

Room 2A, 1 Capitol Hill- Providence

### Transportation Advisory Committee

**January 25 - 5:30PM**

Room 300- 235 Promenade  
Providence

### RIGIS Executive Committee

**December 21 -2PM**

William Hall Library- Auditorium  
1825 Broad St., Cranston



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## PHOTO TRIVIA

Where in Rhode Island can you find this building?



See the answer at the bottom of the newsletter!

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## Events

**December 1 [Driving the Future: Intersection of Emerging Transportation Technologies and Energy Consumption](#)**. Gain insight into future energy patterns under different scenarios. Time: 2:30PM. Free. 1 CM.

**December 1 [Planners' Roundtable Discussion/Technical Committee meeting](#)**. See article, above. Time: 2:30PM-4PM. Location: Warwick Public Library, 600 Sandy Lane. free.

**December 5 [Climate Resilience for an Aging Nation](#)**. Hear how to create safer, more livable communities in a changing world by integrating aging considerations into community planning and disaster preparedness. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

**December 5 [Leading Business, Serving Society](#)**. Author Andy Hoffman will discuss how climate issues evolve as political issues and why people reject climate change. Time: 7PM. Location: URI Edwards Hall, 64 Upper College Rd., Kingston, and online. Free.

**December 6 [Technology Solutions in Transportation](#)**. Panel discussion about the impact of technology in transportation and what to expect in the future. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free.

**December 7 [Green Municipal Aggregation and Your Community](#)**. GMA/CCE allows a community to negotiate a bulk purchase of electricity, saving RI residents money on electric bills and adding more renewable energy to their electricity. Time: 7:30PM. Free.

December 7 **[Identifying Measures of Distress for Economic Development](#)**. Learn more about Identifying Distress in Economic Development alongside partners leading economic data efforts across the nation. Time: 1PM. Free.

**December 7 [Trail Planning and Design: Foundations of Success](#)**. Webinar will review several common approaches and technologies for trail planning and design projects and provide attendees with real world examples. Time: 1PM-2PM. Free.

**December 8 [Unlocking Civic Data: Shaping Future Cities through Information](#)**. Learn about data-driven urban planning, how to humanize data, effective ways to communicate data risks, and case studies. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

**December 13 [Advancing the Management of Urban Forested Natural Areas](#)**. Webinar creates a stage for experts to share the latest science, practice, and policy on urban and community forestry. Time: 1PM-2:15PM. Free.

**December 13 [Climate Justice Hour](#)**. Learn how you can advocate for climate justice. Time: 7PM. Location: Central Falls Landing, 1420 Broad St. Free.



**December 13 [Equitable Resilience Planning Frameworks](#).** How to engage and center the needs of the most vulnerable community members when developing climate resilience plans. Time: 1PM-2:15PM. Free.

**December 14 [A Safe Systems Approach: Working Across Disciplines to Improve Safety and Health Equity Outcomes](#).** Transportation professionals can promote roadway safety by incorporating public health into transportation planning. Time: 2PM. Free.

**December 14 [Encouraging Indigenous Participation in Trail Management and Interpretation](#).** Engage indigenous communities in the interpretation of trails/public lands to help all visitors connect on a deeper level. Time: 1PM-2PM. Free.

**December 14 [The Future is Smoky](#).** With increasing wildfire activity due to changes in climate, smoke will likely become more prevalent and continue to have an effect on society. Time: 11AM-12:30PM. Free.

**December 19 [EC4 Council meeting](#).** This will be a hybrid meeting of the RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council, with the opportunity for the public to join via Zoom. Time: 2:30PM-4PM. Location: 250 Promenade St., Room 300, Providence.

**December 19 [Financing Childcare Facilities with Bonds](#).** Experts will discuss challenges faced in financing childcare facilities and share examples of how bonds can be used to support such businesses. Time: 2PM-3PM. Free.

**December 19 [Planning for Physical Activity](#).** The Active Towns Initiative will discuss planning for physical activity through parks, safety, streets, and livable transportation. Time: 12PM. Free. 1 CM, 1 CNU-A.

**December 21 [Outdoor Electric Assist Devices: Opportunity or Opposition](#).** This webinar addresses recent advancements in technology incorporated into bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and wheelchairs. Time: 1PM-2PM. Free.

**January 6 [TransportationCamp](#).** This annual "unconference" is for advocates, practitioners, professionals, students, and others to share their ideas and perspectives, and to take stock of where we're going. Time: 10AM-4PM. Fee: \$10.

**January 10 [Collaborations to Save Threatened Tree Species](#).** Webinar creates a stage for experts to share the latest science, practice, and policy on urban and community forestry. Time: 1PM-2:15PM. Free.

**January 11 [Risk Management During Trail Construction](#).** This webinar will discuss best practices to reduce risk to your trail crew, company, agency, or organization during trail construction activities. Time: 1PM-2PM. Free.

**January 17 [Building Climate Resilience: Transforming Communities through Green Workforce Development](#).** Learn how communities have built green workforce programs to transform vacant/contaminated land while bridging communities' climate and economic goals. Time: 1PM-2:15PM. Free.

**January 17 [URI Food Summit: From Seed to Shore- Powering Environmental Stewardship Through Innovative Food System Practices](#).** Join government, academic, business, and community partners to discuss how to employ innovative practices within our food system to support environmental stewardship. Time: 9AM-12PM. Free.

**January 25 [Measuring the Safety of ADS: How Safe is Safe Enough?](#)** The potential safety benefit of automated driving systems (ADS) and where current technology

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## Grants & Deadlines

**December 1** [Rhode Island Council for the Humanities Major Grants](#) intent to apply deadline for grants (\$2,000+) in support of public projects and documentary film/media projects that will begin after April 1, 2024.

**December 6** [Love Your Block](#) helps communities identify projects and awards mini-grants to support neighborhood-driven solutions that a community can implement.

**December 6** [RIDEM Outdoor Recreation grant program](#) provides matching funds to cities, towns, and recognized tribes for the acquisition, development and renovation of outdoor recreational lands and facilities.

**December 11** [HOPE VI Main Street Program](#) provides grants to small communities to assist in the renovation of historic or traditional central business districts by replacing unused commercial space with affordable housing units. (Deadline extended).

**December 15** [RIDEM Climate Change Community engagement grants](#) offer up to \$40,000 each for community groups to engage directly with the EC4, state agencies, and consultants working to prepare Rhode Island's *2025 Climate Action Strategy*.

**December 15** [Tree City, Tree Campus, and Tree Line USA](#) deadline for community urban forest resources.

**December 19** [Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants](#) for Tribes and Underserved Communities will help support community-driven habitat restoration and build the capacity to more fully participate in restoration activities.

**December 19** [FY24 Recovery Challenge Fund](#) helps to secure information about endangered or threatened species, to aid in their recovery, and to conserve the ecosystems upon which they depend.

**December 31** [National Fish Passage Program](#) provides technical/financial assistance for dam removals, culvert replacements, floodplain restoration, and the installation of fishways.

**December 31** [T-Mobile Hometown Grants](#) support small towns, villages, and territories with populations of less than 50,000 to build, rebuild, or refresh community spaces that help foster local connections.

**December 31** [Walmart Local Community Grants](#) fund Community and Economic Development, Diversity and Inclusion, Education, Environmental Sustainability, Health and Human Service, Hunger Relief, Public Safety, and Quality of Life projects.

**January 5** [Weatherization Program Assistance Enhancement & Innovation](#) program leverages resources and community partnerships for energy retrofits of low-income residential buildings.

**January 9** [Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program](#) provides funding from the FCC for resources needed to increase awareness of and participation among households most in need of affordable internet connectivity.

**January 12** [Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program](#) provides

financial assistance to Indian tribes, local governments, and qualified non-profits to establish community forests through fee simple acquisition of private forest land.

**January 12** [Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections](#) program helps cultural institutions preserve large holdings by supporting sustainable preventive measures that mitigate deterioration and strengthen institutions' ability to anticipate and respond to disasters.

**January 14** [Road to Zero Community Traffic Safety Grants](#) support a Safe System approach to address traffic fatalities, disparities in mobility safety and access, and improve overall traffic safety.

**January 16** [van Beuren Charitable Foundation](#) funds proposals to achieve measurable results, prioritizing Aquidneck Island and Newport County, but proposals from outside the region that benefit target communities are welcome.

**January 26** [RIDEM Targeted Watersheds/Clean Water Act - Section 319](#) grants for preventing and/or abating water pollution associated with nonpoint sources and to improve or restore aquatic habitat.

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## Articles of Interest

[Designing cities for 21st-century weather](#)

[Newport to crack down on noise with the help of AI](#)

[RI Superior Court judge affirms plan for affordable housing](#)

[Where in America are we actually building new housing?](#)

[Battery energy storage facility ordinance drafted to protect residents](#)

[The 2022 RI outdoor economy: Report](#)

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## Contact Us

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

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## Photo Trivia Answer

**JAMESTOWN**  
**Clingstone (1905)**

Photo: Providence Journal

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