



April 2024

Statewide Planning is 60!



The RI Division of Statewide Planning is celebrating our sixtieth birthday this year!

Created in 1964 as the "Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program in the Division of Planning," the office was established by Chapter 42-11 of the RI General Laws as the central planning agency for state government. The work of the Program is guided by the

State Planning Council, comprised of state, local, and public representatives and federal and other advisors.

The stated objectives of the Program are: "to prepare strategic and systems plans for the state; to coordinate activities of the public and private sectors within this framework of policies and programs; to assist local governments in management, finance, and planning; and to advise the Governor and others on physical, social, and economic topics."

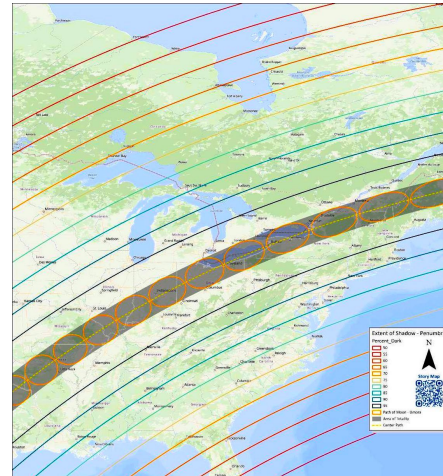
As well as serving as the state's land use planning office, Statewide Planning is also the state's sole metropolitan planning organization (MPO). In 1974, Rhode Island Governor Philip W. Noel designated the State Planning Council as the MPO, which was affirmed by Governor Bruce Sundlun in 1992. Dan Varin was the first Associate Director of Statewide Planning and led the office from shortly after its creation until his retirement in 1996.

MPOs were created by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 as a reaction to urban highway projects that often destroyed housing and local communities, particularly those belonging to people of color or low-income persons. States were required to form an MPO for any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000 to ensure local cooperation in transportation planning and to provide "cooperative, comprehensive and continuing" multimodal planning for urban areas. As one of over four hundred MPOs in the U.S., we are required to undergo a recertification review by FHWA and the Federal Transit Authority every four years.

Stay tuned for more facts and trivia about our office in upcoming newsletters!

Upcoming Partial Solar Eclipse

You have most likely heard by now that on April 8, 2024, a solar eclipse will traverse from Mazatlán, Mexico to Newfoundland & Labrador, Canada. The path of totality (or the area where the sun will be one hundred percent blocked) during this eclipse will be to the north of Rhode Island, passing through Burlington, VT, Lancaster, NH, and Caribou, ME around 3:30PM. Those of us south and north of the path of totality will see a partial eclipse, which will still be a sight to behold (with the proper eye protection, of course).



On April 8, the eclipse should begin at 2PM and end at approximately 4:30PM. Statewide Planning's Supervising GIS Specialist Garth HoxsieQuinn says, "As this is during the beginning of afternoon rush hour traffic, you should plan travel accordingly. For Rhode Island, approximately ninety percent or more of the sun will be blocked and, while this is not a total eclipse, it should still be a spectacular show, weather permitting!" The website [timeanddate](https://timeanddate.com) has animation of what the eclipse will look like in the Providence area.

Viewing the solar eclipse should be done in a way that will protect your eyes from harm. The [American Astronomical Society](https://www.aas.org) has a page dedicated to safely viewing the upcoming solar eclipse, with a link to suppliers of solar viewers and filters and instructions on how to safely view the eclipse with and without proper viewers/filters.

You can also view a [story map](#) created by [Garth](#) that has additional information about this eclipse.

Social Equity Platform Input

We need your feedback and ideas for the Rhode Island Social Equity Data Platform !

The RI Division of Statewide Planning has partnered with several different state agencies to build the online Platform in the wake of the [Justice40 initiative](#) in order to better align our understanding of social equity data. The goal is to inform planners and decision makers as they start to plan for, prioritize, and implement projects that are sensitive to the needs of communities. The draft platform pulls together more than thirty spatial data indicators on public health, environmental justice, socioeconomics, and transportation into one easy to use, publicly accessible website.

We need help making the Platform as useful and accurate as possible and to brainstorm what future iterations could look like. Join us by registering for one of the following sessions on Wednesday, **April 24, 2024**:

[Virtual Listening Session #1](#)

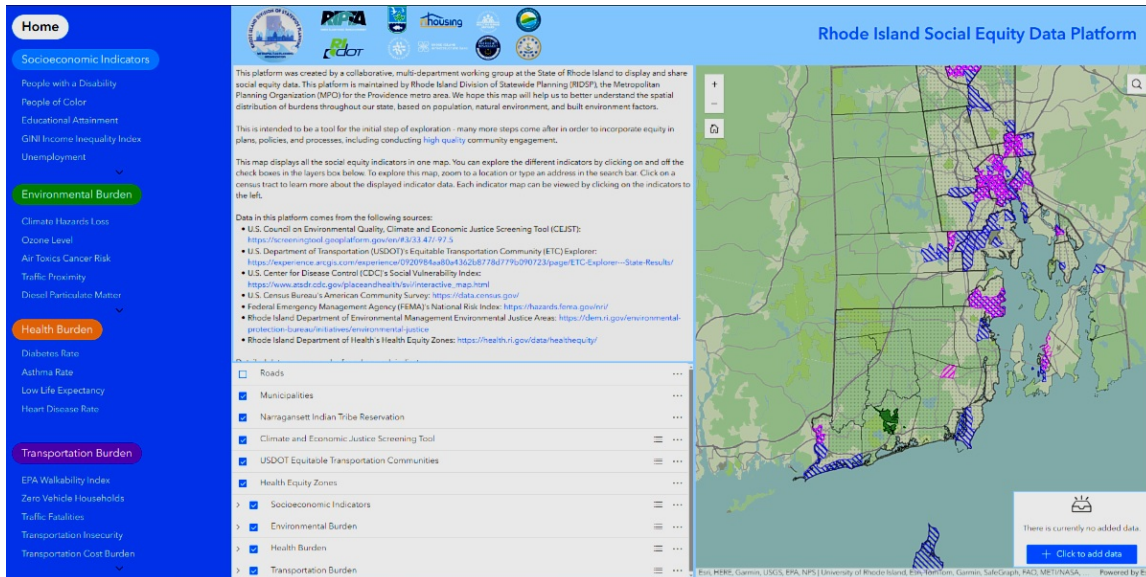
12PM – 1PM

[Virtual Listening Session #2](#)

5:30PM – 6:30PM

Reach out to Supervising Planner [Liza Farr](#) (401/222-6479) with any questions or

comentarios. Para solicitudes de interpretación en español, envíe un correo electrónico a Liza Farr.



Remembering Dr. Marcia Marker Feld

Longtime University of Rhode Island Community Planning Professor Marcia Marker Feld passed away on March 16, 2024. She was 89 years old.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Marcia was the first woman to earn a PhD in urban planning from Harvard University. She graduated from Brooklyn College in 1956 and went on to get a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania before earning a PhD in city planning from Harvard University in 1973. From 1972 to 1975, she ran the Metropolitan Planning Project, helping to desegregate Boston schools.

After earning her PhD, Dr. Feld began teaching at the University of Rhode Island, where she served as chair of the Graduate Department of Community Planning and Area Development (CPAD) and executive director of the URI Urban Field Center in Providence. She continued to teach at the University of Rhode Island until her retirement in 2008, when she was named emerita. The following year, the university created a lecture series in her honor.

Marcia received the "Lifetime Achievement Award for Campus-Community Partnerships" from the Office of University Partnerships, U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development in 2004. The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning annually gives the Marcia M. Feld Leadership Award to recognize outstanding women leaders in their organization.

Many planners educated in Rhode Island were impacted by Marcia's fierce determination to both "do good and be right" and to "remember who your client is," whether they met her in the classroom or at the Urban Field Center. Planning education in RI was richer for having Dr. Feld as CPAD Chair, a professor teaching planning theory, and as a woman who really cared about the students and the program.

Remembrances may be made to Congregation Shaarei Tefillah, 35 Morseland Avenue, Newton, MA 02459, www.shaarei.org or Yad Chessed, 440 Totten Pond Road, Waltham, MA 02451, www.yadchedded.org.

Upcoming Statewide Planning Meetings

State Planning Council

April 11 - 9AM

Room 2A, 1 Capitol Hill, Providence

Water Resources Board

Technical Committee Only

April 12 - 9 AM

Big River Management Area (BRMA)
Starting Location- TBA

Transportation Advisory Committee

April 25 - 5:30PM

Rm 300, 235 Promenade St.
Providence

Technical Committee/Planners' Roundtable

June 6 - 2:30PM

Barrington Public Library, 281 County
Rd.- Collis Family Gallery

All meetings are open to the public.

PHOTO TRIVIA

Do you know where in Rhode Island
you can find this building?



See the answer at the bottom of the
newsletter!

Events

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

April 1 - 30 Earth Day/Earth Month activities around the state.

April 1 - 30 Rhode Island Cemetery Weeks. Annual event features tours, clean-ups, gravestone conservation demonstrations, and talks that raise awareness about Rhode Island's local historic cemeteries and promote their preservation. All events are free.

April 3 Building the Future of Quonset Business Park. Overview of projects such as preparing the Port of Davisville to serve as a regional offshore wind hub to adding flex office space. Time: 12PM. Free.

April 4 Made By All: How Can Placemaking Help Downtowns Bounce Back? Discussion about the state of post-pandemic downtowns, case studies of how downtowns are adapting, and the role of public spaces. Time: 12PM. Fee: \$25-\$75.

April 5 Creating an Implementable Housing Plan: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the San Antonio Housing Plan. Hear how to move from a housing framework to an implementation plan with targets and an action plan tied to funding. Time: 2PM. Free. 1 CM.

April 5 Digging Deep into the Data: Analyzing Your Community Using Census Bureau Online Tools. Receive a brief tour of the Census Bureau's website and live demonstrations of data retrieval tools to help you find data quickly. Time: 1PM-

2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

April 5 [Environmental Law & Policy Annual Review Conference.](#) Experts identify innovative environmental law and policy proposals in the academic literature. Time: 9AM-2:15PM. Free.

April 9 [Creating Age-Friendly Communities with Green Infrastructure: How Addressing Needs of Children and Older Adults](#) Age-friendly resilience strategies can mitigate risks while strengthening social infrastructure. Time: 1PM. Free.

April 9 [Navigating the AI Landscape: Strategies for State and Local Leaders](#) Webinar will focus on AI's impact on state and local governance, focusing on opportunities, challenges, and the need for informed decision-making. Time: 3PM. Free.

April 10 [Wildfire Effects and Recovery in Urban Ecosystems.](#) Learn about recent urban wildfire experiences, local needs, and current efforts to document, support, and study impacts and recovery efforts. Time: 1PM-2:15PM. Free.

April 11 [How Zoning Broke the American City and How to Fix It.](#) Hear about national zoning reforms and how to create more equitable and useful places to live. Time: 1PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

April 11 [Public Sector AI Governance: Navigating Risks, Regulations and Policy Creation.](#) Webinar will explore approaches to effectively governing AI and empowering your organization to harness its potential responsibly. Time: 1PM. Free.

April 13 [RI Hacking Heritage Un-conference.](#) This participant-led gathering asks questions about community history, heritage, and preservation, together with neighbors. Time: 9:30AM-1PM. Location: Rogers Recreation Center, 60 Camden Ave., Providence. Fee: \$10 (suggested donation).

April 17 [Marginalized Populations' Access to Transit.](#) Learn how do people with intersecting marginal identities experience social exclusion as they travel via mass transit. Time: 3PM. Free. 1 CM.

April 18 [Over the Seawall: The Delusion of Controlling Nature.](#) Hear stories behind the unintended climate adaptation consequences and the fixes that can do more harm than good. Time: 1PM. Free. 1 CM SR.

April 18 [Planning for Inclusive Growth with New Park Projects.](#) Strategies for stabilizing communities when large-scale park and green space projects are planned in under-resourced neighborhoods. Time: 2PM. Free.

April 19 [Best Practices for Brave Conversations.](#) Learn how to use words to change points of view, discuss real situations, and address common statements heard at public meetings. Time: 12PM. Fee: Free for APA-RI members, \$5 for others. 1 CM.

April 20 [Transforming the Landscape: Audubon Native Plants and Pollinators Symposium.](#) Learn how to protect pollinators and other wildlife with healthy gardens and landscaping. Time: 9AM-4PM. Fee: \$30-\$60. Location: Rhode Island College's Donovan Dining Center.

April 23 [Trail Funding Unpacked: Navigating Federal Resources for Sustainable Maintenance.](#) Learn about the funding opportunities available, and strategies to make the most of these opportunities. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free.

April 24 [EV Charging Infrastructure in RI: Phase 2.](#) Hear from the RI Office of Energy Resources on EV charging. Time: 6PM. Free.

April 24 [The Challenge of Net Zero at IRA +1](#) Hear from experts and industry leaders about the changes needed to accomplish the clean energy transition. Time: 9AM-11:30AM. Fee: \$30-\$150.

April 25 [APA-RI Planning Awards Party](#) Celebrate this year's RI planning award winners with food, fun, and great beer! Time: 6PM-9PM. Location: Moniker Brewery, 432 W. Fountain St., Providence. [Tickets](#): \$35 for members, \$45 for non-members.

April 25 [How Engagement Guides the Vision and Planning of a Community Wide Trail Network.](#) Best practices will help create vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable communities through trail development. Time: 1PM-2PM. Free. 1 CM.

May 3 [2024 Power of Place Summit.](#) GrowSmart RI event features a keynote speaker, panel discussions about smart growth, exhibits, and networking. Time: 8AM-4:30PM. Fee: \$30-\$150 (early bird discount ends on 4/19). Senior and student rates available.

Grants & Deadlines

April 1 [Rural Innovation Stronger Economy Grant Program](#) offers grant assistance to create/augment high-wage jobs, accelerate the formation of new businesses, support industry clusters, and maximize local assets in eligible low-income rural areas.

April 4 [Safe Streets for All \(SS4A\)](#) Planning and Demonstration Grants to prevent serious injuries and death on roadways.

April 5 [SNEP Watershed Implementation Grants \(SWIG\)](#) Letter of interest (LOI) deadline for projects that restore water, healthy ecosystems, and sustainable communities throughout Southeast New England.

April 9 [Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Competitive Grants Program](#) supports the development of urban agriculture and innovative production.

April 10 [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) pre-proposal deadline for to enhance protection for coastal communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural coastal hazards and to improve habitats for fish and wildlife.

April 19 [Main Street Rhode Island Streetscape Improvement Fund](#) and [Site Readiness Fund](#) grant application deadline for municipalities from the RI Commerce Corporation.

April 25 [Low or No Emission and Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Grant Program](#) for fixed-route bus operators, including local governments and Tribes.

April 30 [Challenge America Grants](#) from the National Endowment for the Arts focuses on small organizations with projects in all art disciplines bringing art to underserved communities.

May 6 [U.S. DOT Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunities](#) deadline for National Infrastructure Project Assistance grants program (Mega), Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highways Projects grants (INFRA), and Rural Surface Transportation Grant program (Rural).

June 1 [Litter-Free Rhode Island Cleanup/Beautification Microgrant](#) initiative to

conduct litter pick-ups that are timed to be held around Earth Day or other volunteer clean-ups and beautification projects if they are completed by June 15.

Articles of Interest

[WPRI series on housing in RI](#)

[A new surge in power use is threatening U.S. climate goals](#)

[Town council considers at-home burial plots](#)

[Developer asks for extension on 2,300-unit housing plan](#)

[New step of accountability for town drainage plans](#)

[Addition to 'cottage' denied by zoning board](#)

[Barrington planning its own resilience garden](#)

RI Statewide Planning Staff

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

Photo Trivia Answer:

JOHNSTON

[Belknap School \(1839\)](#)

Photo: Wikipedia

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