Land Use 2025: Rhode Island State
Land Use Policies and Plan
State Guide Plan Element 152

The Power of Place Summit
May 12, 2006
The Bay & Beaches
Bikeways & Parks
Farms & Forests
Country Roads
Where We Work
Traditional Neighborhoods
Our Capital City
Authentic Places
Land Use 2025

- Where are we, and where are we going?
- Where do we want to be in 2025?
- Issues to be concerned while getting there?
- How do we get there?
- What must be done to achieve vision?
Where are we?

- 80% + Rhode Islanders still live in urbanized areas along the Bay & major rivers

- In recent decades, growth has been both outward from this core; and coming into the state from neighboring states

- More significant is the way we are growing and impacting on the RI landscape
Changes in Land Use

We Used to Live and Work in Compact Communities....

- Small house lots
- Mix of housing types
- Interconnected street network to disperse traffic
- Mixed uses; Housing, shopping and civic functions
What is Different Now?

- Lots have larger footprints than traditional development
- One dominant housing type (single family)
- Single-use areas - separation of industrial, business & civic uses
- Roads have few interconnections
- Traffic concentrated on collectors and arterials
Results

- Developed land increasing 9 times faster than population
- Population and jobs moving away from urban core
- Unsustainable sprawl
- ~30% of state's land currently developed
It took 330 years to develop the first 20% of our land, but just over 25 years to develop the next 10%.
Total New Developed Land by 2025

109,000 acres or 16% of state area
Population & Land Development Rates in the United States

Changes in Population & Newly Developed Land from 1982-1997
Rhode Island Population & Land Development Rates

Changes from 1982-1997
Where are we going?

Developed and Protected Lands

Map Legend
- RI Town Boundaries
- Existing Development (1995)
- Protected Lands (2005) / Urban Parks
- Open Water
- UNP: Undeveloped / Unprotected Lands

1995

Current Trend

Scenario Legend
- RI Town
- Existing Development (1995)
- Potential Development by 2025
- Protected Lands (2005) / Urban Parks
- Open Water
- UNP: Undeveloped / Unprotected Lands

2025?
Primary Goals

A Sustainable Rhode Island

Greenspace & Greenways

Excellence in Community Design

First Class Infrastructure
What Does This Look Like?

- Concentrates growth in:
  - Urban Service Boundary
  - Growth Centers

- Maximizes investment in existing infrastructure

- Promotes more efficient development:
  - Infill
  - Rehabilitation
  - Higher Densities

- Maintains Green and Open Space
What Does This Look Like?

To save more of this:
We need more of this:
And less of this:
Not all new ideas

Relate state land use policies to anticipated population growth to enhance the distinction between urban and rural places.

Use open space to control and shape urban growth.

Promote the use of higher residential densities' and smaller lot frontages in urban and suburban areas, and town centers, where public water and sewer service is present or planned.

Promote low overall density where public service are not planned. Promote the clustering of development in these areas.
I'm sorry, good intentions aren't enough.
What Needs To Be Done?

State Investment Strategy that focuses support for growth-inducing development investment within the Urban Services Boundary and in Growth Centers.

R.I. Statewide Planning Program 05-12-06
State Investments

Discretionary public infrastructure investments which can help shape Smart growth:

- Community Development - CDBG
- Housing - Neighborhood Opportunities Program
- Economic Development - CEDS
- Land Preservation - Open Space grants, Bikeways
- Drinking Water - Clean Water SRF
- Wastewater - RI Clean Water Finance SRF
- Transportation - Transportation Enhancement Program, CMAQ
- Education - School Housing Aid
What Are Some Of The Other Issues?

- Affordable Housing
- Economic Development
- Resource Constraints
  - Water
  - Sewer
- Open Space Protection
- Transportation
The Challenge Ahead

How do we measure success?

Or lack of?
Land Use Performance Measures

To be measured within the Urban Services Boundary:

- $ Investments
- # of Housing Units permitted
- Amount of Commercial/industrial square footage constructed
- Density of housing units
- # of current Comprehensive Plans
- # of Towns with full-time planning staff

To be measured outside of Urban Services Boundary

- # of lost acres of farmland
- # of Growth Centers
- # of current Comprehensive Plans
- # of Towns with full-time planning staff
Capacity of State Level

RC&D Bd
Water Resources Bd
Energy Facility Siting Bd
Drought Management Task Force
Greenways Council
RI Trails Advisory Comm
Rivers Council
Recreation Resources Review
Grow Smart RI Council
AquaFund Advisory Council
State Conservation Comm
Enterprise Zone Council
State Planning Council
Natural Heritage Preservation Comm
Bay & Watersheds Coordinating Team
Historical Preservation & Heritage Comm
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Comm

ADD TIP RIGIS

State Guide Plan Element # 9999
Life of a Local Planner

Another Subdivision Review

It's Budget Time

Affordable Housing Plan due!

Pro Jo is on Line 2

CDBG Application due May 12th!

“My Neighbor's shed is too close to my property line!”

The Manager’s not happy. You did something!
Division of Planning

Housing Resources Commission

Local Gov't Assistance

RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM

Strategic Planning

TRANSPORTATION
LAND USE * CENSUS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

R.I. Statewide Planning Program 05-12-06
2006 Planning Challenge Grants

$538,650

Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
City of Pawtucket
City of Woonsocket
Grow Smart RI
The Providence Foundation
Town of Bristol
Town of Foster
Town of Hopkinton
Town of Middletown
Town of North Kingstown
Washington County Regional Planning Council
Opportunity for Change?

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AN INTEREST-ONLY LOAN? SURE, YOU LOOKING TO BUY AN EXPENSIVE HOUSE OR CONDO?

NO, I'M LOOKING TO FILL UP MY SUV.
Tools to Promote Compact Development

Community Comprehensive Plans
Form based Codes
Transit Oriented Development
Projects of Regional Significance
Transfer of Development Rights
Permit Allocation Systems
Historic Tax Credits
Tools to Promote Preservation

- Comprehensive Plans
- Land Acquisition
- Farmland Zoning
- Historic Overlay Zoning
- Buying Development Rights
- Cluster Development
- Conservation Development
Outreach Needed
Training Needed
The Choices We Face
Rhode Island from Space

1999 LandStat Image
Legacy Of Our Actions
Acknowledgements

Thanks for use of images and photographs:

Grow Smart RI
RI Economic Policy Council
R.I. Builder Report/New River Press
URI Laboratory For Terrestrial Remote Land Sensing
United States Environmental Protection Agency
It's nice, I guess but it's no Rhode Island.