

THE RHODE ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STANDARDS
GUIDANCE HANDBOOK SERIES

**GUIDANCE HANDBOOK #6:
PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Approved by the Rhode Island State Planning Council on
January 14, 2016

The general assembly declares it is the intent of this chapter to [...] promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well being of each municipality and the state.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsection 45-22.2-3(b)(2)

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The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Guidance Handbook Series is the result of over twenty-four months of cooperation and coordination among state agencies, local planners and other professionals interested in helping cities and towns craft better comprehensive plans. The guidance development process was overseen by the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee, a dedicated group of planning, land use, legal and community professionals who worked diligently to develop content on the comprehensive planning process and to review topical content as it was developed. Without this group the manual would not have become reality.

Additionally, the topical content for the guidance handbook series was developed in conversation with numerous experts, including staff from the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program. These knowledgeable individuals are the reason that the manual is helpful, user-friendly and thorough.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is meant to be an accompaniment to the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual (“the Standards Manual”), providing additional information on the economic development-related standards contained within the manual, as well as general guidance on planning for economic development. The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual and the other guidance handbooks in the series can be found online at www.planning.ri.gov/statewideplanning/complanning/.

This manual is split into two sections. [Section 1 - General Information on Planning for Economic Development](#) provides general information, including the purpose of doing so, relevant documents to review and ways to connect economic development and the other topical areas. [Section 2 - Fulfilling the Standards](#) provides information on satisfying the specific requirements presented in the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Standards Manual.

NOTES

In some cases, this guidebook presents “notes” that are relative to the content being discussed. Each note that occurs within the text will be tagged with a symbol to alert the reader to the note’s purpose, as shown below.



This symbol is used to identify references to the Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL). Blue text within this note provides a link to the actual RIGL citation.



This symbol alerts the reader to something that is required for State approval.



This symbol alerts the reader to potential data sources.



The text following this symbol provides additional suggestions to enhance comprehensive plans.



This symbol alerts the reader to sample goals, policies and actions that would fulfill the requirements.



This symbol indicates general information that is secondary to the main point of the text, but could be helpful to the municipality.



This symbol alerts the reader to a cross-reference within the guidebook series. If a concept is mentioned in the text area and more information on the concept is available elsewhere in the guidebook series, this note will point the reader to where to find it.

SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION ON PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Economic development is the sustained, concerted action of policy makers and communities to create the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life. Economic development involves expanding the capacity of individuals, firms and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, lower transaction costs, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services. It also involves expanding businesses to create greater economic opportunity for residents and ensuring that these opportunities are accessible. Economic development requires effective, collaborative institutions focused on advancing mutual gain for the public and private sector. Economic development is also about communities building on the assets and strengths that make them unique and that complement, rather than compete with, the assets for their neighbors. Economic development is essential to ensuring that Rhode Island's economic future is bright.

While it will differ from municipality to municipality, the economic activities considered within a comprehensive plan should include commercial and industrial development and redevelopment for uses such as offices, retail businesses, restaurants, entertainment, personal services, warehousing and distribution, factories, and agriculture.

Municipal economic development includes developing the supporting infrastructure that businesses depend on, ranging from transportation to education, creating a high quality of life for employees, and maintaining an efficient and predictable regulatory environment. For comprehensive planning, planning for economic development is not only an assessment of quantitative measures (e.g. the value of what is produced, the number of people employed, etc.) but also enacting goals, policies and implementation actions that would strengthen the community's living standards, character, and the overall quality of the community's infrastructure, education and regulatory framework.



The required content for related to economic development stems from the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsections [45-22.2-6\(b\)\(7\)](#) and [45-22.2-6\(b\)\(12\)](#).



Agriculture is an important form of economic activity for the State. Guidance Handbook #7 - Planning for Agriculture presents the requirements for addressing agriculture within a comprehensive plan.

WHY INCLUDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Planning for economic development is important for increasing local business activity, which in turn augments local tax revenues and provides residents with places to work, shop, and obtain services. The comprehensive planning process can help to identify the community's needs and to determine the appropriate mix and distribution of economic activities in order to achieve the community's vision.

While responsibility for promoting economic development is shared among several sectors, including State government, educational institutions, and private enterprise, local governments play a unique role. It is critical for municipalities to determine how much remaining land, if any, should be reserved for economic growth, and the most appropriate location for such uses, so that there continues to be enough businesses to maintain the community's fiscal health. It is also important for communities to consider the ways in which existing retail, office, industrial and agricultural areas are changing, so that the municipality can determine and meet business needs. Municipalities must also consider whether the current mix of economic activities suits the community's needs, desires and fiscal situation, so that actions can be taken to diversify the economic base if necessary.

RELEVANT STATE GOALS AND POLICIES

Every comprehensive plan must be consistent with and embody the State's goals and policies for economic development as found in the State Guide Plan and the laws of the State. The goals and policies listed below represent the main themes of the State's goals and policies for economic development and are intended to provide focus as to which aspects of the State's goals and policies are most important for local comprehensive planning.



See the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL subsections 45-22.2-6(b)(1) and 45-22.2-9(d)(3).

FROM THE STATE GUIDE PLAN

Provide educational and training opportunities to activate a 21st century workforce.

[Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity, ED Goal 1 page 46](#)

Foster an inclusive economy that targets opportunity to typically underserved populations.

[Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity, ED Goal 2 page 57](#)

Support industries and investments that play to Rhode Island's economic strengths.

[Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity, ED Goal 3 page 66](#)

Create great places by coordinating economic, housing and transportation investments.

[Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity, ED Goal 4 page 81](#)

Create a stronger and more resilient Rhode Island.

[Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity, ED Goal 5 page 94](#)

Create a climate where our companies, our workers, and the state as a whole can develop a competitive advantage.

[Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity, ED Goal 6 page 111](#)

Conserve and enhance desirable existing industrial areas, regional shopping areas, office complexes, and concentrations of service activities to maximize the investment and utilization of existing infrastructure.

[Land Use 2025: Rhode Island's State Land Use Policies and Plan, LUP 29, page 2-9](#)

FROM THE RHODE ISLAND GENERAL LAWS

[...] It is the policy of the state to retain existing industries and to induce, encourage, and attract new industries through the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of industrial, manufacturing, recreational, and commercial facilities, as well as transportation, residential, environmental, utility, public service, institutional, and civic and community facilities, and to develop sites for those facilities.

It is declared to be the policy of the state to promote a vigorous and growing economy, to prevent economic stagnation, and to encourage the creation of new job opportunities in order to ameliorate the hazards of unemployment and underemployment, reduce the level of public assistance, increase

revenues to the state and its municipalities, and to achieve a stable diversified economy.

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation Act, RIGL subsections 42-64-2(h) and 42-64-2(i)

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Before beginning assessment of existing conditions, needs and trends, and before developing new goals, policies and actions, communities should review other state and local plans and other documents that are relevant to planning for economic development, including:

- Any local or regional economic development plans that may be available;
- “Rhode Island Rising: A Plan for People, Places, and Prosperity,” available at http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/Econdev/2015/RhodeIslandRisingFinal3_10_15.pdf;
- “An Equity Profile of Rhode Island,” available at <http://www.commerceri.com/documents/reports/Equity-Profile-of-Rhode-Island-Report.pdf>;
- The RI Division of Planning’s “Economy RI,” available at <http://www.commerceri.com/documents/reports/Economic-Development-Data-Analysis-and-Assessment-Report.pdf>;
- The RI Commerce Corporation’s “Actions for Economic Development in RI,” available at http://www.commerceri.com/documents/reports/CommerceRI_Highlights_Report.pdf;
- The RI Commerce Corporation’s “Understanding the Economic Development Opportunity and Impact of Climate Change,” available at <http://www.commerceri.com/documents/reports/CommerceRI%20EDandClimate.pdf>;
- The RI Department of Environmental Management’s “Rhode Island Green Industry” report, available at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/pdf/greenemp.pdf>; and
- The Made in Rhode Island Manufacturing Collaborative’s “Report to the Rhode Island General Assembly, April 2014,” available at <http://www.commerceri.com/documents/reports/MadeInRICollaborativeReport-FINAL.PDF>.

STAKEHOLDERS TO INCLUDE

In addition to the general public, when discussing how best to plan for economic development, municipalities may benefit from involving:

- Local commercial, industrial and agricultural business owners;
- Representatives from the local Chamber of Commerce;
- Local real estate developers;
- Local service providers of workforce training;
- Local human services agencies;
- The Zoning Enforcement Officer;
- The local Building Official;
- The local Fire Marshal;
- Any local economic development staff;
- Economic development counterparts in neighboring municipalities;

- Representatives from Commerce Rhode Island; and
- Representatives from the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training.

MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PLAN

Though there are several specific topics that are required to be addressed within a comprehensive plan, it is important that municipalities not consider the topic areas in as segregated elements, but rather as pieces of a larger system. Everything within a community is connected in diverse and varied ways, all of which should be considered when crafting a comprehensive plan. The information provided below is intended to highlight a few of the ways that municipalities should think about the connected nature of the topic areas.

Economic development is a theme that should be considered and integrated into all topical areas of the plan. While many communities may find it convenient to do so, it is not a requirement for State approval to have a specific economic development chapter within the comprehensive plan. Communities may organize their plans however they wish, except that plans must include separate chapters on Land Use and the Implementation Program.

RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE

Economic development serves two key purposes for any community. It is both the source of individual wealth and prosperity and a source of revenue for municipal needs. Types of economic activity, ranging from agricultural to heavy industry, and the locations for these activities, will go a long way in determining the character of the community. The Land Use section of a comprehensive plan, as displayed on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), will determine in broad terms whether the economic activity of that community will be characterized by growth centers, Main Streets, industrial parks, highway retail strips, farms, and all other forms of business. The FLUM sets the course for future zoning amendments, providing direction as to what types of business development will be allowed in the future.

RELATIONSHIP TO NATURAL RESOURCES

Many municipalities, especially more rural ones, may identify natural resources as a source of economic development opportunity. In Rhode Island, the primary natural resource based economic activities are agriculture and fisheries, with additional opportunities in forestry and, to a limited extent, extraction of sand and gravel. Your comprehensive plan should consider areas where natural resource based economic activity is feasible and desired, and reflect these considerations on the Future Land Use Map.

RELATIONSHIP TO RECREATION

Comprehensive plans should reflect the direct and indirect influence that open space and outdoor recreation can have on the local economy and ensure that the plan contains sufficient goals and policies to protect and manage these areas. Open space and outdoor recreation may relate to economic development through tourism, the provision of private facilities, and by enhancing quality of life. Visitors may be attracted to the community for the opportunity to hike, bike, fish, sightsee, or otherwise engage in enjoying outdoor activity. They may also patronize local shops, eat at local restaurants, and stay at local bed and breakfasts. Additionally, some outdoor recreational facilities, such as golf courses, are economic generators in themselves. Areas where commercial outdoor recreation, such as golf courses, are feasible and desired should be displayed as such on the future land use map and supported by appropriate zoning. It should also be noted that the amenities provided by open space and outdoor recreation can attract both

businesses and workers to locate in a community by enhancing the overall quality of life.

RELATIONSHIP TO HOUSING

The availability, quality, and affordability of housing are key factors in determining potential opportunities for economic development. Without a sufficient supply of affordable housing that meet the needs and preferences of residents, employers may be at a competitive disadvantage due to difficulty attracting and retaining workers. The construction of new housing, when appropriate, can create jobs and opportunities for business in the community and nearby, creating the potential to stimulate the local economy.

RELATIONSHIP TO TRANSPORTATION

Transportation and transit play a critical role in economic development as they connect people with jobs and customers with goods and service providers. Access to markets and workers are vital components to the success of a business. In this respect, businesses need to be located in areas that allow easy flow of goods, employees, and customers. For example, retail establishments depend on roadways and parking for customer access while warehousing operations may depend on access to rail lines and interstate highways. The adequacy of existing transportation systems and the impact of future development on the existing systems should be taken into consideration when planning for economic development.

RELATIONSHIP TO NATURAL HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is projected to increase the severity and frequency of many natural hazards that could affect communities throughout Rhode Island. These impacts have the potential both to severely harm Rhode Island's economy but also represent opportunities for economic development and expansion. Communities should consider reducing risk and losses of infrastructure and economic assets when drafting the economic development section of its comprehensive plan. Municipalities should also consider opportunities for economic innovation as it relates to preparedness and climate adaptation.

A NOTE ON KEEPING STATISTICAL DATA RELEVANT

It is not uncommon to see comprehensive plans that feature a multitude of tables, charts, and graphs presenting economic data produced by State or Federal agencies, ranging from unemployment rates to output by Industrial Code. While some of this information may present useful background information, as described later in this chapter, it is not necessary to reproduce it in the comprehensive plan unless there is a meaningful connection between the data and the assessment of your community's economic profile. Additionally, even if there is a connection, presenting "snapshot" data is not particularly valuable as it only gives a picture of a moment in time, rather than identifying economic trends over a long period of time. Meaningful trends can only be observed over the long-term, which, in the case of most economic trends, should be a period of at least ten years.

SECTION 2. FULFILLING THE STANDARDS

STANDARD 6.1

DESCRIBE THE EXISTING TYPES AND PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES THAT EXIST WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY BY:

- a. Identifying the business and industry sectors within the municipality that are significant employers, large revenue generators or substantial contributors to the tax base;
 - b. Identifying the business and industry sectors within the municipality that are expanding or shrinking; and
 - c. Discussing any areas of the community where the economic activity is changing, whether in terms of size, form or nature of activity.
-

To better understand the possibilities for development and growth, a community must understand its current place in the local and regional economy, which requires assessment of the existing types and patterns of economic activity that exist within the municipality. When identifying economic activities, communities must consider all sectors of business, including various types of commercial and industrial uses, tourism-related industry and food-based businesses, such as agricultural operations, fishing and aquaculture.

The first step in describing the existing types and patterns of economic activity will be to look at the existing land use map, which is described in more detail in Guidance Handbook #13 - Planning for Land Use. The existing land use map will provide a general picture of what types (commercial, industrial, agricultural, etc.) of economic activity exist within the municipality and where those activities currently occur. However, the existing land use map will not provide all of the detail necessary for the community to understand its economic situation.

To identify the business and industry sectors within the municipality meeting the above criteria, it may be helpful to review the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) data, available through the U.S. Census at www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/index.html. When discussing areas of economic activity that are changing, it may be helpful to consider trends in vacancy rates, mix of businesses, etc. For example, if a Main Street or downtown business district is identified in your assessment, it would be important to describe whether the mix of business has remained fairly constant or how the composition of the stores has changed over the past ten years. Also, though not required, it may be informative to consider whether the trends within the municipality are proceeding at a faster or slower pace than in the rest of the state.

When assessing the types and patterns of economic activity, communities should consider the following guiding questions:

- What comprises the economic base of this community?
- Are natural resource-based industries (including fishing, farming, or forestry) important in the community and, if so, are they growing or declining?
- Is tourism, including agri-tourism, birding and heritage tourism, an important part of the local economy?
- What role do home occupations play in the community, if any?
- What types of change is the local economy experiencing?
- Is there is a traditional downtown in the community and, if so, is it deteriorating or thriving? How is

this affecting the community?

- What are the employment and commerce strengths of neighboring municipalities? How can the community build on the strengths of neighboring municipalities?
- How does the existing regulatory structure and process support or hinder economic development?



CRAFT A BETTER PLAN

While not required, it may be useful to include a brief historical perspective on how and why the current economy of the community and region developed. Given Rhode Island's rich history of agriculture and industrial mills, much of our present landscape is directly connected to the economic patterns of our past. Also, though not required, some communities may wish to identify in a general sense, where the local residents work and how the community fits into the larger labor market.



DATA SOURCES

To fulfill this standard, communities may want to use the following data sources:

- Data from the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training Labor Market Information Center, available at <http://www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/data.htm>.
- Data from the Providence Plan available at <http://provplan.org/data-and-information/data-and-tools>.
- Discussions with the local Chamber of Commerce, local business owners and other economic development stakeholders.

STANDARD 6.2

ASSESS AND DISCUSS THE WAYS IN WHICH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN IMPROVE THE LOCAL BUSINESS CLIMATE BY:

- a. Discussing the significant opportunities that exist to further support the businesses within the community's major or expanding business sectors;
 - b. Discussing any issues that may exist related to the services and infrastructure provided for local businesses;
 - c. Discussing any local economic or regulatory issues affecting the business and industry sectors within the municipality; and
 - d. Describing any local economic development plans, programs or other incentives currently in effect or offered by the municipality.
-

There are many factors that affect economic activity that are beyond the control or influence of local government. However, in order to develop appropriate policies and actions that will 1) create a climate in which business activity will grow and businesses will thrive, and 2) conserve and enhance areas suitable for economic expansion and/or redevelopment, communities must assess those forces that are within its control and determine how best it can support local businesses and improve the local business climate.

Local regulations, including zoning standards and permitting procedures, can affect business activity in a variety of ways. While public safety and welfare must never be compromised, to create a conducive business climate, local regulations and permitting procedures should be designed to be as clear, predictable, coordinated, and expeditious as possible. Also, municipal governments can support local business by providing adequate infrastructure and services, including transportation infrastructure, sewers, public water, and access to broadband telecommunications.

When assessing the ways in which the local government can improve the local business climate, communities should consider the following guiding questions:

- What steps has the community taken to support local businesses and industries?
- To what extent is the community leveraging its existing assets, including natural resources, infrastructure, services, and facilities to support economic development?
- How does the existing regulatory structure and permitting processes support or hinder economic development?
- What steps has the community taken to support local businesses and industries?
- What additional infrastructure would be needed to support the community's goals for economic development?
- What changes to the zoning ordinances might improve economic development opportunities?
- How are local taxation policies affecting local businesses?



DATA SOURCES

To fulfill this standard, communities may want to use the following data sources:

- Discussions with the local Chamber of Commerce, local business owners and other economic development stakeholders.

STANDARD 6.3

INCLUDE GOALS THAT EMBODY THE STATE'S GOALS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND POLICIES TO SUPPORT EACH GOAL.

The goals and policies of the State call for economic development to occur in a holistic, sustainable, and integrated manner. To do this, municipalities should target economic development activities in areas where infrastructure is already in place, consider natural hazards, housing, transportation patterns, and economic development activities of neighboring municipalities, and act in a manner that preserves our natural and cultural resources.

Comprehensive plans must include one or more goals that further the State's goal that economic development occur in a holistic, sustainable, and integrated manner, and policies to support each of the identified goals. The goals and policies that may be appropriate for a community's comprehensive plan will depend on the context of the municipality, including the existing types and patterns of economic activities, the mechanisms by which the municipality is currently supporting the various economic industries within the community, and the goals for the other topical areas of the comprehensive plan, such as housing, natural resources, natural hazards and climate change and transportation.

To determine the goals and policies that may be appropriate for the community, consider the following guiding questions:

- What scale of economic activity does the community wish to achieve?
- Does the community wish to be a "bedroom" community, where the majority of residents commute to work in other cities and towns, or does it wish to be a hub, where businesses and employees cluster in dense areas?
- Are there any specific segments of the economy that the community wishes to promote and support?
- To what extent are commercial and industrial tax revenues needed for a healthy municipal budget?
- What community needs might be met by the types of economic activity being considered?



For more information on the difference between goals, policies and implementation actions, see Guidance Handbook #1 - The Comprehensive Plan 101.



SAMPLE GOALS

- Build and maintain a sustainable economy.
- The community experiences sustained economic vitality.
- Our municipality will host sufficient businesses so as to provide job opportunities and overall economic well-being to our residents.



SAMPLE POLICIES

- Work to retain and expand businesses that have a positive economic impact on city residents, including industries that are historically important to the city.

- Expand economic opportunity and the municipality's economic base by focusing efforts on retaining existing businesses and attracting new businesses.
- Create a business-friendly environment to stimulate the growth of business and the creation of good jobs that improves the quality of life for residents.
- Establish public-private partnerships with private enterprise to increase capital available for local investments.
- Cooperate with regional nonprofit industrial development corporations.
- Direct public investment toward designated redevelopment or growth areas.
- Support, develop and retain locally-owned businesses.
- Promote infrastructure and service improvements that support business and job growth.
- Support and encourage partnerships with business improvement districts and main streets groups to enhance the attractiveness of these districts for employers, workforce and visitors.
- Use incentives to stimulate business development and job creation, particularly for those businesses that provide locally needed products and services.

STANDARD 6.4.A

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

CREATING A CLIMATE IN WHICH BUSINESS ACTIVITY WILL GROW AND BUSINESSES WILL THRIVE

Comprehensive plans must include implementation actions that will help to create a climate in which business activity will grow and businesses will thrive. Implementation actions aimed at creating such a climate may seek to facilitate private action, to provide a streamlined and efficient regulatory and permitting process, to enhance quality of life for employees, to create more affordable housing options, to ensure adequate facilities and services to meet business needs, etc.

To determine the implementation actions that may be appropriate for the municipality, consider the following guiding questions:

- In addition to allowing for efficient private markets, to what extent can the municipality actively promote or incentivize certain economic development actions?
- How could the community continue to leverage, and expand its assets to support and promote economic development?
- How can the community's economic development strategies complement assets that exist within the community and in neighboring communities?
- How can the municipality enhance economic opportunities?
- Who can the municipality partner with to create a competitive economic climate?

If the community wishes to offer incentives for economic development, some detailed analysis may be required to determine which incentives are appropriate. Communities may wish to consider the following guidance, when determining the manner in which incentives should be pursued:

- Determine the purpose of offering the incentive, or what the incentive is intended to accomplish;
- Determine the information and data needed to track progress towards accomplishing the intended purpose;
- Track progress and make adjustments if the incentive is not producing the desired results;
- Actively hold recipients accountable for any stipulations required of the incentive;
- Avoid "zero-sum" incentives designed to attract business from another municipality to the community; and
- Seek incentives that help grow existing businesses.



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Develop and adopt predictable, transparent processes that support business development.
- Hire an Economic Development Coordinator to facilitate business development activities.
- Develop a state-of-the-art, streamlined, one-stop, integrated predictable system for building, fire and development permits that allow permits to be issued in a timely manner.
- Evaluate all existing and proposed city ordinances for their impact on the city's economic

development competitive advantage.

- Establish a Main Street Advisory Committee to assess the vitality of the area’s businesses and how the municipality can support and enhance the climate for local businesses.
- Form a task force consisting of residents, local business owners and municipal officials to develop strategies to better support local businesses.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to reduce barriers to home-based businesses.

STANDARD 6.4.B

Include implementation actions within the Implementation Program that address:

CONSERVING AND ENHANCING AREAS SUITABLE FOR ECONOMIC EXPANSION AND/OR REDEVELOPMENT.

Comprehensive plans must include implementation actions seeking to conserve and/or enhance the areas designated as suitable for economic activity on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The policies and actions should implement the vision for economic expansion and/or redevelopment described by the community.

When considering which policies and implementation actions may be appropriate for the community, consider the following guiding questions:

- What can the municipality implement to spur economic growth in targeted areas?
- What types of redevelopment, and in what locations, will be necessary to achieve the economic vision for the community? How can the municipality assist in making redevelopment happen?
- Does the existing zoning ordinance and map need to be amended to accommodate the desired types and patterns of economic activity?
- Do any new ordinances or regulations need to be enacted in order to ensure that new growth happens in a manner desired by the community? Do any existing ordinances or regulations need to be updated?
- Are the current permitting processes (building permits, fire safety, etc.) timely, predictable and coordinated?



SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Designate a local growth center where new development activity can concentrate.
- Conduct a parking study for downtown areas to determine whether additional public parking is necessary.
- Evaluate zoning strategies to promote a more cohesive retail environment in the downtown and village areas.
- Install wayfinding signage in the downtown and village areas to help visitors find businesses.
- Amend the zoning ordinance and/or land development regulations to include design guidelines for commercial areas within the municipality.

RHODE ISLAND
STATEWIDE
PLANNING
PROGRAM

