



March 2024

RI Complete Streets Plan

We've all had the experience of walking on a street with a too narrow (or no) sidewalk while cars whiz by at high speeds, and feeling entirely unwelcome and unsafe. Some people in Rhode Island have to endure that experience regularly, while others spend time in traffic to drop off their child at a school down the street because they their kid will be hit by a car. A new state plan aims to change those experiences.



Work is now underway to create a Complete Streets Plan for Rhode Island. Many streets throughout our state were designed to accommodate automobiles safely and efficiently, but left out other modes of travel. The result of this one-mode design is often an unsafe and inhospitable street for transit riders, pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-car users. This plan will guide our state and municipalities in re-designing streets to be "complete," meaning that they are safe and accommodating of all users of the transportation system. The Complete Streets design model is a powerful tool to help reduce fatalities and serious injuries, while creating more sustainable and equitable streets through the addition of sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crosswalks, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more.

The plan will examine the barriers that exist in Rhode Island to implementing Complete Streets, as well as outlining policies and strategies to overcome them. Liza Farr, Supervising Planner, says, "The Division of Statewide Planning is working with Toole Design Group to lead the creation of the plan, which will include a complete streets policy and approach, a set of design guidelines for different street typologies, and implementation guidance for the state and municipalities." The design guidelines will include cross sections, typical design details, sketches, and drawings.

The process is being led by an inter-agency working group, with input from stakeholders and community engagement. The planning process will take around eighteen months, wrapping up in summer 2025. Funding is provided through the U.S.DOT's Metropolitan Planning funds under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Please reach out to Liza Farr at liza.farr@doa.ri.gov if you would like to engage with this

plan, and keep an eye on the [RIDSP website](#) for project updates.

Foster Comprehensive Plan Approved



Foster joins the ranks of Rhode Island communities that now have an approved community comprehensive plan!

Foster Town Planner Grant McGregor and Planning Board member Susan Joyce (in the center of the photo, left) recently appeared before the RI State Planning Council to receive a certificate acknowledging this milestone. The plan took several years of in-house work (plus a pandemic), but the Town crossed the finish line, receiving approval from the RI Division of Statewide Planning in January. Congratulations to Foster on their hard work and dedication!

The Foster Comprehensive Plan can be viewed on the Statewide Planning website: www.planning.ri.gov.

Planners' Roundtable Discussion- Today!

The next Planners' Roundtable discussion will be held on Friday, March 1 at 2:30PM at **The Foundry, 235 Promenade St., Providence, Room 300**. There will be a presentation from the Office of Energy Resources on integrated grid planning and we will continue discussing planners' experiences with implementation of 2023 legislation.



Park in The Foundry visitors' lot on Promenade Street: the lot entrance is just west of Holden Street on Promenade. Take the elevator to the third floor and look for signs for Room 300. If you cannot attend in person, you can also join via [Zoom](#).

Planning Tool: Climate Mapping

[Climate Mapping for Resilience and Adaptation \(CMRA\)](#) is an interactive geospatial website to help federal, state, local and tribal governments learn about climate hazards impacting their communities. The mapper, which is part of the [U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#), can help planners understand current and future exposure and link past and future exposures together.

The mapper allows users to customize risk analysis to see the risks a location faces. Risks include extreme heat, drought, flooding, coastal inundation and wildfire.

The portal also includes a real-time dashboard with interactive maps showing where common climate-related hazards occur today, links to federal funding opportunities related to each hazard, and climate and non-climate data for building local resilience plans.

Events

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

March 5 [E-Scooter and Micro mobility Safety, Part I: Research, Tools and Guidance.](#)

Hear about research on e-scooter safety, tools and resources that communities can use to develop their own programs, and Federal funding opportunities. Time: 1PM. Free.

March 5 [How Pre-Approved Building Plans Can Unlock Housing Potential in Your Community.](#)

Learn how pre-approved building plans can make it fast and easy for citizen developers to build more housing in your town, case studies, and best practices. Time: 1PM. Free.

March 6 [Accelerating Climate Resilience Webinar: Equitable Engagement with Community Liaisons](#)

This webinar will explore how cities are using community-led planning to broaden and deepen engagement; hear about projects that lead with equitable engagement. Time: 12PM-1PM. Free.

March 6 [Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-making.](#)

U.S. DOT public involvement experts will provide an overview of key public involvement concepts, approaches, and strategies. Time: 12PM-3PM. Free. Register by COB on March 1.

March 8 [Emerging Practices for Local Approval of EV Charging Stations.](#)

This session will discuss planning, zoning, and permitting for EV charging — the challenges and lessons learned. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM SR.

March 9 [Rhode Island Land & Water Conservation Summit.](#)

Learn strategies to conserve landscapes and waterways, environmental challenges, and opportunities for collaboration. Location: URI Memorial Union, Kingston. Time: 8:30AM-5PM. Fee: \$80-\$100 (or pay what you can).

March 12 [Regional DOT Leadership on Transportation Goals for New England.](#)

EBC Transportation Infrastructure webinar with briefings from New England transportation agency leaders about initiatives and priorities. Time: 9AM-12PM. Fee: \$30-\$150.

March 13 [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\) Program: Implementation Grants](#)

General overview of the SS4A program and the grant application process, with a particular focus on applying for Implementation Grants. Time: 1:30PM. Free.

March 14 [Assessing Cool Corridor Heat Resilience Strategies for Human-Scale Transportation.](#)

Heat is the top weather-related killer in the U.S. Hear concepts for planning and heat resilience, including mitigation and management strategies. Time: 1PM. Free. 1 CM.

March 14 [Cultural Landscape Training Framework](#)

Webinar will provide an overview on how outdoor professionals can embrace multiple perspectives of the Indigenous landscapes they work on. Time: 1PM. Free. 1 CM.

March 14 [Rhode Island Compost Conference.](#)

Learn about composting, hear about solutions, and attend workshops on composting, food waste, and sustainability. Time: 9AM. Location: Rhode Island College. Fee: \$20-\$40.

March 15 [Climate Adaptation at the Regional Scale: From Planning to Implementation.](#)

Speakers will explore the benefits and challenges of bringing

communities together at the watershed, coastal, and other regional scales in order to move from planning through to action. Time: 9:30AM-12:30PM. Fee: \$15-\$45.

March 15 [Generative AI Strategies](#) Learn the risks and benefits of this technology, emerging applications, and how to apply the technology in a planning context. Particularly in small rural municipalities, it can better serve communities. Time: 1PM-2:30PM. Free. 1.5 CM

March 18-19 [Climate Change and Human Migration: An Earth Systems Science Perspective](#). Workshop on impacts of catastrophic events on people and infrastructure and how climate change may affect migration. Time: 10AM. Free.

March 19 [The Drive for Dollars: How Fiscal Politics Shaped Urban Freeways and Transformed American Cities](#). Hear Brian Taylor, Director of the UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies, discuss his book on a topic that still shapes our cities. Time: 3PM. Free.

March 21 [Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives](#). Hear about the role of “demand response” services, when to redesign a network, and claims that transit will soon be obsolete. Time: 1PM. Free. 1.5 CM.

March 28 [Planning on Tap: Art & Culture Master Plans](#). Learn about the purpose of arts and culture master plans, hear about community examples, and learn about the process and components. Time: 4PM. Free. 1 CM.

March 29 [Dealing with Uncertainties in Water-Sensitive Design and Planning](#). Hear major challenges of taking a long-term perspective on water, assuming that climatic conditions will drastically change in the future. Time: 12PM. Free. 1 CM Sustainability.

Grants & Deadlines

March 1 [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#) is a partner-driven approach to conservation that funds solutions to natural resource challenges on agricultural land.

March 4 [Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants](#) support the implementation of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that are expected to achieve the following three core goals: housing, people and neighborhoods.

March 5 [Historic Preservation Fund Semiquincentennial Grants](#) will support the physical preservation of a broad variety of cultural resources associated with the founding of America in commemoration of the country's semiquincentennial (250th anniversary).

March 6 [AARP Community Challenge Grants](#) fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages, with awards from \$500 to \$50,000.

March 15 [RIHPHC Certified Local Government \(CLG\) Grants](#) support projects within the following activity categories: Identification/Evaluation of Historic Resources, Planning, Resource-Specific, Public Education, and Statewide Projects.

March 15 [Rhode Island Foundation Community Grants](#) provide grants up to \$10,000 for community-making efforts that make un important things happen at the

intersection of people and places.

March 15 [USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Organic Transition Assistance](#) for Rhode Island farmers.

March 19 [U.S. DOT's Bridge Investment Program](#) is a competitive, discretionary program that focuses on existing bridges to reduce the overall number of bridges in poor condition, or in fair condition at risk of falling into poor condition.

March 19 [Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program](#) for properties listed in -or determined eligible for listing- the National Register of Historic Places located in rural areas.

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.

Articles of Interest

[Rhode Island's housing crisis: how did we get here?](#)

[RI to build 'missing ramps' from I-95 north to Route 4 south](#)

[A rough winter has South County's coastline on the ropes in the fight against erosion](#)

[Learning from the past: the Providence Metropolitan Parks Commission](#)

[Newport's housing woes put strain on municipal workers](#)

[Officials say outdoor dining policy benefits customers, businesses](#)

[Nature may provide the best shoreline protection](#)

[It's time for planners to be proactive about church property transitions](#)

RI Statewide Planning Staff

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

Photo Trivia Answer

BURRILLVILLE

[Stillwater Mill](#) clocktower (1904)

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