

SAVING FOR THE FUTURE



A STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN FOR RHODE ISLAND

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Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission

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Providence, Rhode Island 02903

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STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

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Cover Illustration: Resetting the restored lantern on Block Island North Light, 2010

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INTRODUCTION

HOW THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED

This revision of the Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Plan (Plan) was prepared in accordance with the National Park Service requirements for a statewide historic preservation plan by the staff of the RIHP&HC. The assistance and input of others was sought as described below and used as appropriate and necessary, but the RIHP&HC conducted the study, revision, and writing of the plan.

EXTENT OF REVISION

The Plan as revised is a refinement rather than a reorganization of the RIHP&HC planning process. The prior plan has performed well as a useful and efficient method of organizing information about historic resources and setting forth guidance for preservation activities. Given this fundamental effectiveness, the goal has been to update data, obtain current feedback and adjust goals and policies to reflect conditions that have changed and accommodate new circumstances.

REVISING THE PLAN AND PREPARING AMENDMENTS

The process of revising Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Plan began in 2009 with a staff assessment of the 2002 State Historic Preservation Plan and its effectiveness as a guide to the state's preservation efforts over the previous seven years. Concurrently, the RIHP&HC initiated a statewide preservation planning initiative – Preservation Is Local – that was designed to solicit public input on the state of preservation in Rhode Island cities and towns and stimulate discussion on the state's preservation issues, threats and opportunities.

Under the aegis of Preservation Is Local, the RIHP&HC held three regional summits in Spring 2009: at Pawtucket for Providence County; Bristol for Bristol and Newport Counties; and South Kingstown for Kent and Washington Counties. For each summit we convened a group from that region that included the town planners, local historic district commissioners, leaders in preservation societies, land trusts and community development organizations, historians, archaeologists and other preservation professionals and historic property owners and managers. In preparation for the summits we asked all the invitees to complete an online survey on the current state of historic preservation with an emphasis on the local community.

The discussions at the summits were led by RIHP&HC staff together with representatives from our principal statewide preservation partners: Preserve Rhode Island; Grow Smart RI; the RI Department of Environmental Management; RI Statewide Planning; the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission; and the RI Historical Society. Through the use of discussion leaders, each summit touched on salient preservation topics including: survey and registration of historic properties; planning and land-use issues; local historic district commissions and zoning; historic property management; and heritage tourism and education. The summit participants' feedback was extensive and useful and their survey

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responses and multifaceted discussions provided valuable insights that have informed the revised plan.

While many issues were discussed, the most prominent topics of interest and concern about preservation in Rhode Island fell in a few general categories. The first was the improvement of the tools for preservation for the owners of historic properties. This naturally encompasses financial support and incentives for maintenance and rehabilitation, but it also includes the need to make the specialized knowledge on the appropriate treatments and techniques for preserving historic resources more readily available.

A second general area of interest and concern was public education and advocacy for historic preservation. Participants stressed the importance of improving public understanding of the value of preservation. This included interests in developing a stronger preservation advocacy network at the local and state levels, sharing the rich and diverse histories of individual buildings and places to stimulate support for their preservation, and showing that preservation is not just about the presence of the past but is a critical element in maintaining and enhancing the sense of place in our communities today and tomorrow.

A third area was achieving and maintaining the proper balance of preservation activity at the local community level. This applied both to communities with historic district zoning and those where there is very little formal preservation activity. In the former, the emphasis was on the need for ongoing education and outreach with both historic district commissioners and residents to enhance and renew understanding of and respect for the goals and procedures the town has adopted. In the latter, there was considerable interest in exploring a variety of means by which community preservation could grow without historic district zoning.

A prevalent concern that was referenced in both the second and third topics was the need for historic resource identification and research. This interest ranged from survey and evaluation work on local neighborhoods, to thematic studies of under-represented properties such as agricultural resources, and studies of ceremonial landscapes and traditional cultural properties with a strong ethnographic significance.

Supplementing the public input from the Preservation Is Local summits, the RIHP&HC solicited comments for the state preservation planning process from representatives of relevant federal and state agencies, the Narragansett tribal historic preservation office, nonprofit groups and a wide range of other interested organizations and individuals, utilizing the RIHP&HC electronic directory and e-mailings, as well as direct contacts. This was followed by conversations, correspondence and individual meetings with various groups and individuals.

The RIHP&HC staff then completed the revision of the Plan utilizing the collected data and received input. The goals and policies were developed and refined to respond effectively to the issues raised and topics of interest and concern brought forth in the preceding planning process. The draft revised Plan was then made available in July 2011 through the posting on the RIHPH&C website and comments were once again invited from all those who had been contacted previously, using the RIHP&HC electronic directory and e-mailings. Provisions were

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also made to provide the draft Plan in hard copy upon request. Upon review of comments received, the Plan was finalized and approved by the National Park Service on July 3, 2012.

SECTION ONE: WHY PRESERVE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND AREAS?

Over the last forty years Rhode Islanders have made a significant investment of time, effort, and money in the preservation of historic buildings, areas, and archeological sites. Individual property owners have purchased and restored historic houses. Investors in commercial properties have renovated and updated older buildings in our downtowns and industrial properties located throughout the state. State and federal agencies have rehabilitated historic buildings, both large and small, so that they continue to serve the people of Rhode Island. Local communities have developed their own preservation programs and spent scarce dollars on the restoration of important community-owned historic buildings. Colleges and universities have restored some of their important historic buildings; several have developed programs for teaching about archeology and the preservation of historic resources. Religious congregations have supported important restorations of their historic houses of worship. A variety of organizations and individuals have carefully maintained and restored historic landscapes, including parks, gardens, cemeteries, campuses, farms, and estates. Thousands of Rhode Islanders have toured historic buildings and areas in their own communities, have joined organizations that promote historic preservation, and have voted for bond issues which support historic preservation.

Why?

Rhode Islanders' interest in historic preservation and their commitment to its support stem from the belief that the quality of our environment has a direct impact on the quality of each individual's life—and our environment includes the buildings we live and work in, the roads and bridges we travel, the farms, villages, cities and suburbs which form the texture of our daily lives. Just as we work to insure that our natural environment is conserved, that the quality of our air and water is protected, we also work to insure that the best elements of our man-made environment are protected.

Well preserved physical elements from our past—our historic buildings and places—have important value for the future of Rhode Island, value which we can realize by planning to keep those important resources.

What kinds of value are there in historic buildings and places? Part of their value will put dollars in the pockets of Rhode Islanders and part of their value will be gained in improving the quality of life for all of us. If we plan for their future with care and an appreciation of their value, historic buildings and areas will produce an important dividend for the investment Rhode Islanders make in their preservation.

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1. The value of historic buildings and places

Use Value

Most historic buildings can be used for the same purpose they were built. Historic houses have value as dwellings, historic factories can be used for manufacturing, older commercial buildings can still market goods and services. Most of the state's historic buildings are used for their original purpose, and they serve those purposes well. Where historic buildings have outlived their original use, they can be converted to new uses.

Historic open spaces serve a multitude of uses – as productive farmland, important recreational areas and conservation lands that protect environmental, cultural and archaeological resources.

Tourism

Thousands of tourists come to Rhode Island every year—tourism is an important economic generator for the state. Many of those who visit Rhode Island choose our state as a destination because of its special historic and visual character. Travelers seeking cultural and historic attractions drive half of the state's \$2.3 billion annual tourist industry. They come to visit our historic cities, small towns, and countryside, our museums, parks, and golf courses, and to participate in special events that take place in historic areas. They spend money at hotels, restaurants, and retail shops; they create jobs and generate tax revenues.

Community Character

Everyone who lives in Rhode Island lives in an old town or city—even as political jurisdictions, our newest communities are a century old; many have a history of settlement which reaches back three centuries and more. The towns and cities we live in are the product of numerous decisions made by those who lived here in the past—where to live, how to build, how to work, educate children, worship, and travel. When we answer similar questions for our families and ourselves, our decisions are made in the context of the past.

Historic buildings, neighborhoods and places give shape and substance to the communities we live in. The patterns of development that characterize the historic areas of our towns and cities are the patterns with which we still live. And, for the most part, these patterns have made communities which are human-scale, humane, pleasant, and various. While this value may be difficult to quantify, it is very real and readily evident when it is absent.

Even by quantifiable standards, the preservation of historic buildings and places is important in the protection of community character. Much of Rhode Island's beauty and desirability as a place to live and work depend on its historic buildings, neighborhoods and places.

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Growth Management

On the macro scale, the preservation of historic buildings and areas can assist Rhode Islanders in the wise management of the future growth of their communities. Historic patterns of development in each community and throughout the state can provide a model for the future.

The concentrations of development that characterize the state's towns and cities, the ebb and flow of built-up areas and open space have value as a guide for the future of each community. When existing building patterns are treated as the base from which further development takes place, there is much to be gained. Preserving older neighborhoods is a smaller strain on the community's resources than building new development, since the infrastructure of community services is already in place and need not be created anew. And using our old buildings instead of creating new ones reduces encroachment on our diminishing farmland and open space.

Sustainability

On the micro scale, the preservation of historic buildings and areas can improve the sustainability of future development. By preserving and reusing a historic building, we conserve the energy and physical resources that went into creating it, we avoid expending energy and resources to demolish it and send its remains to the landfill, and we eliminate the consumption of the new energy and resources needed to build its replacement. Moreover, historic buildings erected before 1920 have been found to be more energy efficient than the buildings that followed them, due to the solidity and durability of their construction, windows that maximize the availability of natural light and ventilation and features such as high ceilings and shaded porches that reduce summer heat without air conditioning. Historic buildings also lend themselves to a variety of retrofit measures such as insulation that that can increase their energy conservation.

Educational Value

The physical aspects of our history possess a unique ability to provide a direct and tangible connection to the past, which makes them an important educational resource. Some historic buildings are used directly in the educational process. The state's historical societies, preservation societies, colleges and universities, towns and cities, and patriotic organizations own many of Rhode Island's most significant historic buildings. Many are open to the public and are regularly used as an important part of school curricula. Students visit these historic buildings and study the buildings themselves, their collections, and the lives of the people who used the buildings in the past. As archeological sites are excavated, experts learn more about the past and improve our understanding of the generations which preceded us.

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Apart from such direct educational value, there is a broader and even more common value in living and working among historic buildings and areas. The well preserved evidence of the past which surrounds all Rhode Islanders gives each resident and the state as a whole a sense of location in time and space. We are surrounded by the places made by people who lived here before us—their homes, churches, factories, stores—and this helps to give each of us a sense of existing along a continuous line of human occupation. We live in the midst of an important legacy to which we can add before it is handed on to the next generation.

2. Preservation principles

Like all plans, this one draws on basic principles about the best ways to achieve the goals outlined in the plan. Among these principles are:

1—The preservation of historic buildings and areas is a fundamental public interest, a proper and desirable exercise of the state's authority and leadership and the legitimate concern of its communities and its citizens.

2—The preservation of historic buildings and areas is not antithetical to progress or growth or good economic development but has been proven to add significantly to Rhode Island's economy.

3—Historic buildings and areas are best preserved by using them, either for their original purpose or by adapting them for a new use. For some special categories of fragile historic resources, most notably archeological sites, preservation is best achieved by restricting their use to protect them from decay or destruction.

4—The preservation of historic buildings, sites and areas is best achieved when it is integrated into public planning processes rather than when it takes place in opposition to those processes.

5--- Preservation relies on the commitment and effort of private property owners, businesses, non-profit organizations and public entities. Cooperation and mutual support among these different parties are important for successful preservation.

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SECTION TWO: THE CONTEXT FOR PRESERVATION

1. Rhode Island's land and waterways

Rhode Island is the nation's smallest state, only 1214 square miles, and is located in the southernmost tier of New England. The land areas of Rhode Island surround Narragansett Bay, a long narrow estuary oriented north-south and reaching into the land mass of Rhode Island some 30 miles. Narragansett Bay is the dominant geographic feature of both the eastern half of the state and the low-lying coastal strip of the western half. West of Narragansett Bay, the state's land rises gradually into the low gentle hills of the west and northwest. The state's highest point at Jerimoth Hill is only 800 feet. The coastline of Rhode Island (including the bay, its islands, and the southern shore) is over 400 miles long—it has been an overridingly important feature of the state's historical development and will continue to be an important part of its future development. Although Rhode Island is small, its geography and settlement patterns have produced a region of considerable variety.

At the head of Narragansett Bay is the city of Providence, its harbor set at the confluence of the three rivers which drain the northern section of the state. Providence is the state's capital and its economic, educational, and cultural center. North of Providence to the state's border with Massachusetts are the cities and towns of the Blackstone Valley. Once characterized by hardscrabble farms and later by the development of industry in factory villages along the river, the valley's older centers and agricultural matrix are now overlain by suburban development.

The west side of Narragansett Bay developed as a series of small port villages bounded by prosperous agricultural settlements from Cranston to Narragansett, and is now overlain by suburban development. The state's second major river, the Pawtuxet, was (like the Blackstone) the scene of industrial settlements strung along the valley's length.

The western upland areas of Rhode Island along the border with Connecticut are still the state's most rural regions. Meager soils, gentle hills, woods, small streams, lakes and ponds characterize this most sparsely settled region of the state. In this area historically developed for agriculture with some rural industry, limited farming remains among the ex-urban and suburban settlement of the recent past. The largest water body here is the Scituate Reservoir, an impoundment on the North Branch of the Pawtuxet River that provides water to Providence and its environs.

The southern shore of Rhode Island borders on the Atlantic Ocean. West of the bay the coast fronts on Block Island Sound while Rhode Island Sound extends across the mouth of the bay and the eastern coast. The border between mainland and sea is defined by a series of barrier beaches and coastal ponds. Reaching inland from the western coastline is the broad outwash plain of South (Washington) County. The state's best soils are located here, and this has always been an important agricultural area. This plain is bounded to the north by the Charlestown Moraine, a long glacially formed ridge. The moraine region, which is interlaced with ponds, swamps and streams drained by the Wood-Pawcatuck River, supported only sparse settlement historically.

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Summer resort development has been an important aspect of this coastal area and more recently, year-round suburban settlement has spread in both the coastal plain and the hilly moraine.

East of Narragansett Bay, a series of long peninsulas separated by tidal rivers form the northeast shore. Small ports at Bristol and Warren constitute the oldest and largest village centers here, with most but not all of the remaining territory adapted from farmland to suburban residential development. To the southeast the gently rolling lands along the Sakonnet River and the ocean coastline gradually rise to the higher land in eastern Tiverton. The rural agricultural character of the countryside has been retained widely in Little Compton and in much of Tiverton, though the northern part of the latter town has urban and suburban characteristics.

Narragansett Bay contains a range of islands both large and small. The largest and most important is Aquidneck Island; it and the neighboring Conanicut are the only islands connected to the mainland by highway bridges. It is dominated by the city of Newport, which has had a varied history as major colonial port, a Victorian summer resort, home to a large naval installation, and now a major tourist resort. To the north and east of Newport, the island's long agricultural history is still evident, though suburban development has claimed large areas. Conanicut Island, which is much smaller than Aquidneck, features a central village and a rural hinterland that now supports suburban as well as agricultural settlement. Prudence and Hog Islands to the north have primarily summer communities and the other smaller islands are not inhabited. The Bay islands and the neighboring coastline at the mouth of Narragansett Bay have all been fortified in the past and retain a significant built legacy of nation's harbor defense system.

Block Island, located in the Atlantic Ocean 20 miles southeast of Newport, is an important resort. Characterized by a rolling landscape dotted by hills and ponds, Block Island has retained a rural quality that is overlain by summer resort development primarily from the Victorian era.

2. The people of Rhode Island

Rhode Island's population is growing very slowly. In 2010, 1,052,567 people lived in this state, an increase from 2000 of only .4%. The increase was very small by national standards and represents an accelerated slowing of the growth rate in the previous decade.

Rhode Island is a very densely populated state, with over 1000 people per square mile. This average masks the very uneven distribution of the state's population. The greatest concentrations of Rhode Islanders are in the older core cities of Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket and East Providence and in the early suburban areas, especially Warwick and Cranston. Most of Rhode Island's population growth recently has been in its rural towns, such as West Greenwich, North Smithfield, and South Kingstown. This pattern is likely to continue as South County and the hill towns continue to exhibit an expanding population. However, urban centers, especially Providence have also attracted a growing population of Hispanic residents and others due to the availability of housing and employment.

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According to US Census data, 81.4% of Rhode Islanders are Caucasian; 5.7% are African-Americans or African; .6% are Native Americans. 2.9% are Asians. Hispanic people represent 12.4 % of the population. Rhode Islanders are diverse in their national ancestries, a legacy of the successive waves of immigrants who have historically made the state their home and new immigrant groups who continue to settle here. The state has large groups of people whose ancestral origins are in Ireland, Italy, France and French Canada, England, Portugal, Germany, Poland, and Southeast Asian nations, such as Viet Nam and Cambodia. An increasing number of Rhode Islanders can claim Hispanic origins, as immigration from Latin American countries has become an important pattern. A further legacy of immigration to Rhode Island is the historic importance of the Catholic churches—more than half of all Rhode Islanders claim an affiliation with the church.

Rhode Islanders are on average somewhat older than Americans in general. In 2009, 14.3% of the population was 65 and older, ranking Rhode Island thirteenth highest in the percent of its population 65 years and older. This group of Rhode Islanders is likely to increase in size in the next ten years. On average, Rhode Islanders are neither poorer nor richer than Americans as a whole; their per capita income is roughly equal to the national figure, though there are disparities among communities. Rhode Island has the sixteenth highest median household income and tenth highest median family income.

About 63% of all Rhode Islanders own their own homes, though there are differences among communities. In Barrington, 9 out of 10 residents live in houses they own; in Providence about 4 out of 10; in Central Falls about 2 out of 10. Just over 50% of the state's housing was built before 1960 and 34% was built prior to 1940.

Historically, large numbers of Rhode Islanders have made their living in manufacturing. The state was one of the earliest and most intensively industrialized. Since the early twentieth century, manufacturing has been a stagnating rather than expanding component of the economy. Today only 12.2% of Rhode Islanders still work in the manufacture of goods (especially metals, machinery, jewelry, textiles, marine and defense industries, and chemicals). Three to four times as many Rhode Islanders make their living in non-manufacturing sectors such as education, health care, trade, construction, financial industries (as the state has become a regional banking center), transportation, and service industries. Once located almost exclusively in urban and semi-urban sites, Rhode Island's industry is now far more suburbanized as many towns have developed industrial parks to attract manufacturers.

Farming has been a tremendously formative influence on the Rhode Island landscape and it remains so, despite the precipitous decline in active farmland in the last half of the twentieth century. Although the numbers of Rhode Islanders who farm for a living are few, their numbers are growing as is the amount of land they have in cultivation. Between 2002 and 2007 the US agriculture census reported the number of RI farms grew 42% to 1,219 and the land in farms totaled 67,819 acres, an increase of 11%. Nursery stock, firewood, and turf are the state's principal agricultural products; there are some dairy and poultry farms, orchards, apiaries, and truck farms. The principal field crop is potatoes. Rhode Islanders' interest in sustaining local agriculture is increasing as well with the numbers of community supported agriculture farms increasing and land trusts incorporating agriculture into their plans.

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A small commercial fishing fleet operates out of Rhode Island. Galilee is the principal fishing port, with some boats docking at Newport, Sakonnet and other harbors. Shellfishermen and their smaller craft work throughout the Bay, putting in or using dockage in the small harbors in both the East and West Bay. Shellfish aquaculture is a small but well-established fishery as well with operations in the Bay from Bristol south and in the coastal ponds.

Commercial centers in Rhode Island have traditionally been located in the downtowns of older core cities, such as Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket. These centers faded as commerce became more suburbanized, first with major shopping malls and then commercial strip development constructed in suburban areas and nearby Massachusetts in the decades after 1960. The construction of the Providence Place mall, which opened in downtown Providence in 1999 marked a rare but significant reintroduction of retail trade to the state's largest downtown.

Rhode Islanders employ an elaborate transportation system which has an important impact on planning for the future. Major highways and bridges connect all areas of the state. Interstate Highway 95 is the major north-south route for automobiles, passing from the southwest section of the state through Providence and into Massachusetts. It is roughly paralleled in its southern reach by US-1. Interstate Highway 195 is a major east-west route, moving traffic from eastern Massachusetts into Providence; its extension through western Rhode Island into Connecticut is US Route 6. Route 138 carries east-west traffic across southern Rhode Island from Newport, across the bay, and across South County. Interstate Highway 295 serves as a ring road around Providence. Route 146 provides a direct route up the Blackstone Valley from Providence to Worcester, Massachusetts. This system of roads assures that daily commuting between any two points in the state is possible and that transportation constraints on the outer limits of residential development have been virtually removed.

Railroad passenger and freight service connects Rhode Islanders and their goods to out-of-state destinations via AMTRAK, the MBTA, and the Providence and Worcester Railroad. The major passenger stops traditionally have been Providence and Kingston; commuter rail stops have newly been added at T.F. Green Airport in Warwick and Wickford Junction in North Kingstown. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority provides commuter bus service; a private carrier provides interstate bus service from a terminal in Providence. Commercial carrier air service is located at the state's T. F. Green Airport in Warwick; Quonset State Airport is used by the Army and Air National Guard; and the smaller state airports handle general aviation.

Rhode Island's ports, once a key to the state's industrial development, no longer dominate the transport network, a reflection of the tremendous increase in the importance of truck transport. The primary port of Providence now ships only a small fraction of the goods that once passed through, mainly petroleum and bulk materials such as salt, cement and scrap metal. However, with its deepwater channel and drydock facilities, it is the second busiest port in New England, and due to expand with new container handling capabilities. The state port at Quonset Point/Davisville, which is a legacy of the US Navy's presence here in World War II, is an important entry point for imported automobiles, as well. The state's smaller ports--Newport, East Greenwich, Pawtuxet, Bristol, Melville, Wickford, and Sakonnet--have become recreational yachting harbors with a small number of commercial fishing vessels and, at Naval Station Newport, a few US Navy and Coast Guard vessels.

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Rhode Island has a variety of educational institutions that have an important impact on its future. The state's university is located in rural South County and is a major employer and development determinant in that region. Rhode Island College is located in Providence and North Providence. The three branches of the state's community college are located on suburban campuses in Lincoln and Warwick and an urban campus in Newport. The state also operates a system of vocational-technical schools. Elementary and secondary education is carried out by local school districts; a parallel system of religious schools educates about 10% of the state's pupils. Major private colleges and universities are located in Providence, Bristol, Smithfield, and Newport. These institutions have important roles in preservation, especially as property owners.

3. Making public policy decisions about preservation in Rhode Island

Rhode Island's lawmaking body is the bicameral General Assembly. State senators and representatives are elected from districts created for this purpose. Rhode Islanders elect five general officers, chief among them the governor who is the state government's executive officer.

State government is divided by function and area of concern into departments managed by directors who are appointed by the governor. The State Guide Plan provides guidance for the state as a whole in the realms of physical, economic, and social development. This Plan is developed and maintained by the Statewide Planning Program of the state Division of Planning, which is also responsible for encouraging the implementation of the Plan's elements and coordinating the actions of state, local and federal agencies and private individuals within the framework of the state's development goals and policies.¹

Preservation's integral role in state government is established by the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Act and the historic preservation element in the State Guide Plan. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission is the state's agency for historic preservation and its State Historic Preservation Office under the federal preservation program. The RIHP&HC operates both federal and state programs related to historic preservation and reviews actions by federal and state agencies which may have an impact on historic resources. This process of reviewing federal and state activities is carried out under the authority of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Act, respectively. The RIHP&HC operates the historic Eisenhower House in Newport and also has responsibilities for heritage programming not directly related to historical preservation.

¹ The Statewide Planning Program administers Planning Challenge Grants funded with Federal Highway Administration Metropolitan Planning funds. These funds are received by the State of Rhode Island and allocated to the Statewide Planning Program in its role as staff to State Planning Council, the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Rhode Island. The purpose of the grant program is to provide funding for statewide, regional and local planning studies leading to the implementation of the State Guide Plan, particularly Land Use 2025 and Transportation 2030.

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The other state agencies have important roles in preservation planning as well, both directly as property owners and as funding or licensing agencies for others' actions. By the nature of their missions, five agencies in particular are consistently involved in preservation decisions.

- 1) The Division of Planning in the Department of Administration serves as the staff for the State Planning Council, administers the Intergovernmental Review Process, and assists cities and towns in meeting their obligations for comprehensive planning.
- 2) The Department of Environmental Management is the steward for many of Rhode Island's most important historic sites, buildings, and landscapes, is the funding source for the state's programs for public parks and open space, and is the principal planning agency in the state for all issues associated with outdoor recreation, agriculture, environmental conservation and many aspects of environmental regulation.
- 3) The Department of Transportation is responsible for road work and transportation planning which have impacts on historic resources and also administers the federal transportation enhancements program.
- 4) Rhode Island Housing operates programs to promote the creation of housing and to support home-ownership among Rhode Islanders.
- 5) The Coastal Resources Management Council regulates development in the coastal zone where many historic buildings, districts and archaeological sites are located.

The land area of the state is divided into 39 cities and towns. Rhode Island is divided into 5 counties, but this is now just an administrative device used only by the court system. There is no unincorporated land in Rhode Island. Within Rhode Island one Native American tribe is federally recognized—the Narragansett Indian Tribe. The Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, in eastern Connecticut and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe in southeastern Massachusetts are other federally recognized tribes who have traditionally been associated with Rhode Island borderlands. The state-recognized Nipmuc Tribe of Massachusetts and other tribal groups without federal recognition have associations with Rhode Island as well.

The forms of local government vary among Rhode Island communities. In general, cities have a mayor as the executive and a council which serves as the legislative body. In eight smaller towns, the executive and legislative functions are combined in a council. About two-thirds of the towns have a manager/administrator. Most Rhode Island communities have professional planning staffs.

Among their many functions Rhode Island communities are required to plan for their future development. In accordance with state statute each community has prepared and adopted a comprehensive plan which outlines the intent of its citizens and government for determining the future maintenance of their community. State statute also requires that a community's zoning ordinance must be in agreement with its comprehensive plan. These plans are updated every five years. There are seven prescribed functional elements of the comprehensive plan (land use plan, economic development, natural and cultural resources, services and facilities, open space and recreation, and circulation); the Natural and Cultural Resources Element explicitly requires the community to address its program for the protection of historic resources. Ideally, the historic importance of resources such as commercial Main Street districts, residential districts, schools, landscapes and open spaces is also factored into the other relevant elements.

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Actions of city and town government which could have an impact on historic resources may require review by the RIHP&HC under federal or state preservation regulations. Historical review at the local government level also takes place in certain communities. State statute allows Rhode Island communities to zone for historic resources and to require the review of a local historic district commission before alterations or demolitions that affect historic resources in a designated zone take place. Seventeen of Rhode Island's thirty-nine communities use this mechanism; Providence and Newport have preservation planners on their planning staffs.²

Historically, governmental functions have not usually been regionalized in Rhode Island beyond a few school districts and public utility services. This has changed somewhat; several significant initiatives, including the creation of the Washington County Planning Council, the South County Greenspace Project, the Aquidneck Island Planning Council, the Aquidneck Island Partnership, and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, indicate that regional planning efforts will be more important in the future than they have been.

As noted above, the State Guide Plan developed and maintained by the Statewide Planning Program, serves to guide government agencies at all levels within the state. It contains individual elements such as Land Use, Greenspace, Housing and Transportation that directly involve the state's historic resources. The land use plan, *Land Use 2025*, is the most comprehensive of these as it provides an overarching pattern for the state's growth and development. A key feature of *Land Use 2025* is its focus on preserving the distinction between Rhode Island's historic urban centers and neighborhoods and their rural surrounding areas. To maintain this traditional pattern and encourage sustainable development, the Plan has identified an Urban Services Boundary (USB) that separates the state's more urbanized areas where the infrastructure is well-established from the largely rural areas. It also proposes growth centers, potential areas for development and redevelopment areas that will encourage development that is contiguous to existing development with low governmental fiscal impacts and minimal environmental impacts. Under the Plan, the state and communities are directed to concentrate growth inside the USB and within potential growth centers in rural areas. It is intended as a policy guide for directing growth to areas most capable of supporting current and future developed uses and to direct growth away from areas less suited for development.

Land Use 2025 seeks to address the state's growth and the preservation of its resources as a single issue. At one level this use of the word *preservation* refers to the conservation of the state's rural character and natural resources. However, it also has important implications for the preservation of historic resources in both rural and urban areas. By seeking to focus development in the historic urban areas, the Plan can encourage the reuse of historic buildings and help revitalize historic neighborhoods. Correspondingly, in the rural areas, it can reduce new development that would otherwise transform historic farmland, archaeologically sensitive areas and other historically significant rural resources.

² Communities that local historic district zoning and commissions include Bristol, Cranston, Cumberland, East Greenwich, East Providence, Glocester, Hopkinton, New Shoreham, Narragansett, Newport, North Kingstown, North Providence, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Providence, South Kingstown, and Warwick. All but one of these is also an NPS Certified Local Government. Warren has a voluntary historic district zone.

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It must also be noted that this development design has the potential to have a negative impact on historic resources by stimulating inappropriate new development in historic urban areas or in growth centers in sensitive rural locations. The Plan acknowledges the value of historic preservation and includes the preservation of historic resources and community character in its design objectives. It remains an important corollary of the Plan that the public and the private participants in the state's development acknowledge these preservation objectives and fully incorporate them into their efforts.

4. Preservation partners

There are more than 100 historical and preservation organizations in Rhode Island with an estimated total membership of 25,000. With the exception of the local historic district commissions, these are primarily private entities. Many of these organizations are effective local advocates for historic preservation; they make use of information and technical assistance from the RIHP&HC and in turn distribute that information through their programs.

Among these historical and preservation organizations, a handful are characterized by professional staffs, substantial property ownership, and sophisticated programming, such as the Rhode Island Historical Society, the Newport Historical Society, the Newport Restoration Foundation, the Providence Preservation Society, the Preservation Society of Newport County, and Preserve Rhode Island. The greater number of historical and preservation organizations are small associations, administered by volunteers, often devoted to the history and artifacts associated with a single community, and sometimes serving as stewards and interpreters of an important property in their town. Some of the state's larger communities have specialized preservation organizations as well, such as the Providence Revolving Fund which provides loans and technical assistance to development projects.

On a statewide basis, the Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office is an essential partner in the preservation and interpretation of the cultural resources of importance to the tribe throughout the state. Preserve Rhode Island is also notable as the private preservation entity that advocates for historic preservation on a statewide basis.

There are a number of community development corporations located mainly but not exclusively in the state's urban centers; they support and carry out affordable housing development projects in target neighborhoods. In that role they have frequently worked to preserve historic resources through rehabilitation and reuse.

Groups devoted to the protection and conservation of natural resources and open space have been playing an increasing role as partners in the preservation of historic landscapes and archaeological sites. They can be found among the forty-five land trusts in Rhode Island which operate in all but four of the state's thirty-nine municipalities, and the local conservation commissions that serve in thirty communities.

Preservation has many academic partners in the state's colleges and universities. Historic preservation as an academic discipline is taught at Roger Williams University and at Salve

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Regina University. These universities, Rhode Island College and Brown University also offer training in archaeology through their anthropology departments. Recent additions to these partners are the Public Humanities Program at Brown University in the areas of historic sites research and interpretation and the Community Partnerships Center at Roger Williams University in the areas of planning, architecture and reuse. The Rhode Island School of Design's Department of Interior Architecture possesses specialized skills in the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Other partners include the Landscape Architecture and Art History departments at the University of Rhode Island, the Environmental Studies and Urban Studies programs at Brown and history departments at Brown, Providence College, Rhode Island College and the University of Rhode Island.

There are a number of other professional and avocational organizations that contribute to preservation in Rhode Island, such as the American Institute of Architects' Rhode Island chapter, the American Planning Association's, Rhode Island chapter, Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project, and the New England Chapters of the Vernacular Architecture Forum and the Society for Industrial Archeology.

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SECTION THREE: PRESERVATION IN RHODE ISLAND--THE PAST

Rhode Islanders have a long history of working for the protection and enhancement of their historic buildings and sites. Beginning with sporadic efforts in the nineteenth century to keep buildings associated with the generations which settled Rhode Island and achieved its independence, into the twentieth century when Rhode Islanders developed a systematic approach to the identification and support of their historic resources, the state has a long tradition of affection and support for its special treasures.

The Rhode Island Historical Society, founded in 1822, was an early leader in preservation efforts, encouraging the repair and restoration of Whitehall in Middletown, for example, and commissioning drawings of buildings that could not be saved. Some important archeological sites were identified and studied by members of the Society, including the Native American soapstone quarry in Johnston, the home site and burial site of Roger Williams in Providence and the Jireh Bull house site in South Kingstown. The interest of the Rhode Island Historical Society and other local historians prompted the state to preserve Fort Ninigret in Charlestown in 1883, when the Narragansett tribal lands were dissolved.

In the years following the nation's centennial celebration in 1876, preservation activities quickened. Late nineteenth-century architects used early buildings as inspiration for their new designs. Publication of historical documents and treatises on early buildings increased in number and level of scholarship. Historical and patriotic societies acquired historic buildings to use as their headquarters, beginning the state's long tradition of saving buildings by purchase. Usually these were buildings associated with an important person or event, often related to the War for Independence. In the case of the Newport Historical Society, their 1884 purchase of the Seventh Day Baptist Meetinghouse preserved an outstanding example of early colonial architecture.

In the early twentieth century these traditions continued. The State of Rhode Island acquired the Providence home of Stephen Hopkins, one the state's signers of the Declaration of Independence. Many historical societies similarly acquired houses associated with early families and worked to restore them as educational and social centers. The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities acquired and restored the Clemence-Irons House in Johnston and the Eleazer Arnold House in Lincoln, for example, and an association was created to acquire and preserve the Coventry home of General Nathanael Greene. In addition, groups were created to preserve other aspects of the state's history, such as the Wickford Main Street Association and the Old Slater Mill Association.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the architectural profession developed increasing sophistication and expertise in restoration; in a series of restorations of significant buildings architects such as Norman Isham developed the principles which still guide preservation architects today: scrupulous documentation through drawing and photography; careful analysis of change; and the retention of significant architectural elements from more than a single period.

Until the middle of the twentieth century, historic preservation remained largely the province of private individuals and groups. Their achievements were substantial, and the results of their efforts are still with us today—restored buildings saved by these preservationists grace

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many communities. Buildings such as the Vernon House in Newport, the Gilbert Stuart House and Mill in North Kingstown, the Varnum House in East Greenwich, Shakespeare's Head in Providence, and the John Brown House in Providence testify to the presence in Rhode Island of their original owners and proprietors, but also document the important efforts of the state's preservationists in the developing decades of Rhode Island's preservation movement.

The federal government adopted an early preservation policy with the Antiquities Act of 1906. The act which enabled the preservation of historic and especially archaeological resources on federal lands was an important first step in a federal preservation program, though its primary impact was in the West, where federal lands were extensive. In 1956, Rhode Island adopted a similar law, the Antiquities Act of Rhode Island (RIGL 42-45.1), that authorizes the preservation of archaeological sites on state lands for scientific purposes.

In the mid-twentieth century, the federal government took some tentative steps to broaden its involvement in the preservation of historic sites, buildings and areas. In 1933, the Historic American Buildings Survey was established as part of the New Deal's Civil Works Administration. By the spring 1934, HABS surveyors were at work recording historic buildings in Rhode Island. Although the program entered a hiatus with World War II, it subsequently resumed and more than 350 historic Rhode Island properties have been documented by HABS and its allied programs to date. In 1935 the Historic Sites Act established preservation of historic sites and buildings as a national policy. The act allowed for the designation of National Historic Landmarks, a highly selective listing of places which have value for the nation. The first Rhode Island National Historic Landmark was not designated until the mid-1940s; twenty years later, eleven had been named. Landmark designation has great prestige because the program is so selective, but the designation did not include any protective mechanism or financial assistance.

For the most part, however, historic preservation prior to 1966 and the National Historic Preservation Act remained a private enterprise in Rhode Island. The Preservation Society of Newport County, formed in 1946, began to develop its nationally important program of house museum ownership—the society owns and interprets architecturally significant properties from several periods of the city's history. Other Newport organizations formed in the 1950s and 60s (such as The Point Association, Operation Clapboard, Oldport Association, and the Historic Hill Association) have promoted the preservation of smaller houses and whole streets and neighborhoods. The Newport Restoration Foundation instituted a program in the 1960s to acquire, renovate, and lease dozens of Newport's early houses.

In Providence, the Providence Preservation Society was created in 1956 as a response to the growth of Brown University and its demolition of several blocks of early houses on College Hill. The society was a leader in the Providence City Plan Commission's study of College Hill in the mid-1950s, (a US HUD Demonstration study) and the report which they produced was the turning point for historic preservation in Rhode Island (and a national model).

The report recommended a full-scale preservation program for College Hill: restoration programs, a new national park, educational programming, an historic trail, and protective municipal legislation—a program which in the decades since its proposal has largely been

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achieved. The Providence Preservation Society has expanded its interests over time to include the protection of all of the city's historic neighborhoods.

In other areas of Rhode Island, the 1950s, 60s, and 70s saw the creation and development of private societies to work toward the preservation of historic buildings and areas in most of Rhode Island's cities and towns. Many of these societies own and have restored buildings that are important in their community's history, such as the Western Rhode Island Civic and Historical Society's Paine House in Coventry.

The Native American heritage of Rhode Island received increased attention in this period as well. In Exeter, Eva Butler established the Tomaquag Indian Memorial Museum in 1954 with the museum's longtime curator, Princess Red Wing of the Narragansett Tribe. Professional archaeological studies of Fort Ninigret by Bert Salwen and a Narragansett burial ground in Jamestown by William Simmons in the 1960s marked an important advance in the development of the archaeological record of the contact period. James Deetz's study of the Mott Farm in Portsmouth was one of a number of sites that he studied in this period that made a major contribution to the archaeology of the colonial period as well.

The major commitment of the federal and state governments dates from the 1950s, when the state Department of Economic Development created an initial inventory of some of Rhode Island's historic sites and buildings. As noted above, the state also instituted its Antiquities Act in 1956. In 1956, the state chartered the private Heritage Foundation of Rhode Island. Now called Preserve Rhode Island, the organization owns several important properties and works to promote historic preservation throughout the state.

In 1959 the General Assembly passed the first truly effective preservation legislation for the state—enabling legislation for historic district zoning. Rhode Island cities and towns were allowed to pass special ordinances to protect their historic buildings and areas and to create municipal commissions which would review some of the changes proposed for historic buildings. More than a third of Rhode Island's communities now have such historic district zoning.

In 1966, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act and began the creation of a broad federal program for preservation. The act established the National Register of Historic Places (a list of buildings, sites, districts, and objects worthy of preservation), set up a process of review of all federally funded projects which might have an impact on registered properties, and provided funding to assist states in establishing preservation programs based on comprehensive surveys of historic resources.

Rhode Island began participation in the federal program two years later—the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission was established in 1968. The commission began almost immediately to survey the state's historic and archeological resources, to nominate properties to the National Register of Historic Places, to administer federal grants-in-aid, and to plan for the preservation of worthy resources.

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In the years since its creation, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission has surveyed every community in the state and has published over 50 reports on their historic buildings and neighborhoods. It has also conducted statewide surveys on historic landscapes and outdoor sculpture, and regional archaeological surveys. The survey of the state's historic and archaeological resources is ongoing, as older surveys are updated and new resources are added. The state has placed nineteen thousand, five hundred properties on the National Register and continues to add more. The Commission administers a variety of federal and state assistance programs, offering technical assistance and financial help in the form of loans and tax credits to owners of historic buildings. It does not currently distribute federal funds for grants-in-aid, but does award a limited amount in Certified Local Government survey and planning grants to municipalities with historic district zoning.

Projects proposed by federal and state agencies are reviewed by the Commission for their effect on historic buildings, areas, and archeological sites; in the years since its creation, commission staff has reviewed thousands of projects and have provided assistance to their proponents in avoiding damaging effects on Rhode Island's historic resources.

In the past five decades, historic preservation has become an important part of Rhode Island's civic life. For many residents of the state, it has also become an important part of their decisions about where and how to live. This growing awareness of the importance of our physical surroundings is evidenced in nationally significant planning legislation created by the General Assembly in 1988. With the passage of the Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, Rhode Island became one of the first states that requires communities to plan for the future by creating a comprehensive community plan. These plans, which are in place in all thirty-nine communities, include an element that addresses the community's goals and planned actions to preserve its cultural resources.

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SECTION FOUR: PRESERVATION IN RHODE ISLAND--TODAY

1. Identifying Rhode Island's historic places

Preservation of historic places begins with awareness and understanding of their nature and their extent. While many of us maintain our own informal lists of the historic places we care about, effective preservation planning needs to be based on a more thorough and systematic method of assessment. That foundation is currently provided the statewide survey of historic properties maintained by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission. Since this survey was started in 1968, the RIHP&HC has compiled information about historic and archeological properties in every city and town and survey now constitutes the principal inventory of the state's historic resources used by Rhode Islanders today. While buildings are the largest and best-covered category of properties, the RIHP&HC survey seeks to be comprehensive and its files include a wide range of resources, such as neighborhoods, engineering and military structures, outdoor sculpture, watercraft, designed and vernacular historic landscapes, traditional cultural properties, and terrestrial and underwater archeological sites.

The survey is primarily organized by community and neighborhood. It has been compiled by the professional staff of the RIHP&HC, working closely with local officials and organizations, researching community development through maps and documentary sources and examining all of the buildings and other visible resources in each community. Properties that have historical interest (about 50,000) have been photographed and described on individual data sheets. In addition to the community-based surveys, the RIHP&HC has conducted surveys with a thematic focus to study distinctive aspects of Rhode Island history, such as African-American history, or specific categories of resources, including historic landscapes, outdoor public sculpture, and engineering and industrial properties.

With regard to archaeological resources, the survey has been able to use community-focused reconnaissance work to identify visible or otherwise known archaeological sites and places, but the hidden nature and chronological depth of much of the archaeological record has required other strategies as discussed in the following subsection.

The RIHP&HC has presented its survey findings in a series of published reports that include a concise history of the community, neighborhood or special topic, an inventory of places of historical interest, and recommendations for the future of these resources. These reports currently provide the primary assessment and identification for a community's historic resources. The selective inventories of resources in these reports are supplemented by the inclusive survey files at the RIHP&HC. Many but not all of the thematic surveys are represented by reports as well.

The RIHP&HC staff had completed surveys and reports for every community in the state by the 1990s. However, the identification, location and evaluation of historic resources are always an ongoing process. As our understanding and perceptions change about what has been significant in our past and what is worthy of preservation, there is a continuing need to

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supplement, update and refine its survey with additional information. For example, properties from the recent past will always need to be surveyed and evaluated. Communities updating the cultural resources component of their comprehensive plans or improving their preservation programs (such as in the management of historic district zoning) may also have a need for additional survey information. For these and other instances where new survey work is needed to identify historic resources, the RIHP&HC survey process provides a ready and efficient framework for the survey methods and the means to integrate the new information with existing data.

2. Archaeological resources

Over 2,500 significant archaeological sites, spanning 10,000 years of history, have been identified throughout Rhode Island; many historic shipwrecks lie beneath the state's waters. As most archaeological sites are underground and must be located by careful excavation, these known sites represent just a part of the larger archaeological record within the state. Many more sites are expected to be present in the areas that have not yet been investigated. The identification, study, evaluation, and protection of these known and not-yet-identified resources are important parts of the historical preservation program for Rhode Island. As with historic buildings and other "above-ground" resources, the survey files compiled and maintained by the RIHP&HC archaeological staff is the state's principal inventory of archaeological sites. The sites contained in the RIHP&HC survey are divided into two basic categories: those from the pre-colonial era and those from the colonial era and later.

Archaeological surveys have been conducted throughout the state, with particular attention given to the lands bordering Narragansett Bay and Rhode Island Sound which have an especially rich history of human use from ancient times. Using the results of these surveys, along with information obtained from tribal historians, scholars and knowledgeable informants, the RIHP&HC archaeologists have developed a series of historic contexts that characterize Native American settlement in Rhode Island. The RIHP&HC survey report *Native American Archaeology in Rhode Island* presents that history and a discussion of representative archaeological sites throughout the state. The historic contexts for Native American history and the historic contexts for the colonial and following eras contained in the other RIHP&HC survey reports and other archaeological studies are used by archaeologists to characterize the variety of archaeological sites within the state, to assess the archaeological sensitivity of specific areas and determine where further investigations are warranted.

Conducting archaeological surveys or site investigations requires specific training and expertise to insure that the work is done in a way that minimizes the destructive effects of excavation while maximizing the archaeological value of the data that is recovered. Basic standards for archaeological investigations are provided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeological Documentation and the RIHP&HC *Performance Standards*. In order to insure the quality of the archaeology done in Rhode Island, the RIHP&HC requires that all archaeology done under its review be done by archaeologists that meet the National Park Service professional qualifications standard and follow the RIHP&HC *Performance Standards*. The RIHP&HC staff also advises other agencies and organizations on

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their archaeological needs, provides assistance in developing scopes of work and confers with their archaeological consultants.

For archaeological exploration of state-owned land and water and for surveys conducted in association with government-funded or licensed undertakings, there is a required state permit issued by the RIHP&HC; this permitting process insures that personnel are qualified and the proper scope of work and techniques are designated. The Standards also require that artifacts recovered during excavation are stored and cared for in accordance with the guidelines in the *RIHP&HC Performance Standards*.

Archaeology within the state is undertaken by a variety of entities for several reasons. The RIHP&HC sponsors selected studies that investigate specific archaeological topics and locations or evaluate significant sites as funds allow. A large percentage of the archaeology in the state is carried out by public agencies and some private permit applicants to insure their projects are in compliance with federal and state preservation regulations. Historical societies and other stewards of historic and archaeological properties conduct studies on occasion both to research their historic properties and to insure that archaeological resources are not inadvertently damaged. In these archaeological studies, professional archaeological consultants carry out the investigations. The exceptions to this are the studies carried out by college and university field schools and other archaeological studies which are directed by academic staff and experienced graduate students.

3. Evaluating and listing historic properties in the National and State Registers

Evaluation is an essential corollary to identification in the preservation planning process. Evaluation allows us to assess the historical significance and integrity of resources and thereby helps to determine what properties are most important to preserve. Evaluation has importance on every preservation level, whether it is a homeowner determining what features are critical to a house's historic character, an archaeologist assessing whether or not a site deserves further study, or a community deciding what historic properties deserve special consideration when carrying out a public works project. The most widely used tools for evaluating historic properties are the standards of the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service as the federal government's official list of properties that are significant in American history and worthy of preservation. To meet the criteria for listing on the National Register, a resource must be associated with a significant aspect of national, state or local history and it must retain its historic character. The evaluation and listing of properties on the National Register is a two-step process with the first step at the state historic preservation office and the second at the National Register.

More than 19,500 properties in Rhode Island have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, most of them included in 163 historic districts. Several thousand more properties are probably eligible for registration. The large number of Rhode Island properties in the National Register documents our state's rich and widespread architectural, historical, and archaeological heritage. National Register properties are located in every Rhode Island

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community. Every town and city in the state has at least one registered historic district; some communities have many more. All of the state's National Register properties are also listed in the State Register; some properties are included in the State Register only.

Listing properties on the National Register is initiated in a number of ways, including by owners, by the local community and by the RIHP&HC. Applicants for listing often employ historical and archaeological consultants to complete the research and documentation that the National Register nomination requires. However, applicants who wish to prepare the nomination themselves can obtain guidance from the RIHP&HC staff.

The RIHP&HC has a longstanding commitment to nominating the state's significant properties to the National Register and intends to eventually nominate all eligible properties to the National Register. The RIHP&HC survey reports all include recommendations for properties that most deserve consideration for National Register listing. These recommendations, which are not considered all-inclusive, have been continually updated and augmented in a working inventory of properties that are potentially eligible for the National Register. Towns and cities may have their own priorities for registration and the RIHP&HC also considers them when allocating its staff resources toward National Register nominations.

Resources that meet the National Register criteria are afforded special consideration during government-funded projects to avoid damage or alteration. To facilitate the evaluation of historic properties during the planning for such projects, unlisted properties can be determined eligible for the National Register through a consensus determination of eligibility by the government agency and the RIHP&HC. Listing in the National or State Registers can make eligible for federal and state assistance programs and may also trigger other important financial assistance programs at the community level, such as property tax benefits.

4. Preservation review under government regulation

There are regulations at the federal, state and local level in Rhode Island that provide special consideration for historic resources during the planning for public and some private activities. While preservation is the common goal of all these regulations, there are differences as well similarities in their makeup.

Federal regulations, most notably those established by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800), require federal agencies to identify and address potential impacts to significant historic resources (those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register) that might be caused by proposed undertakings under their jurisdiction. This applies to direct agency undertakings and those that receive federal funding or require federal permits. The agency or its designee carries out this review process in consultation with the RIHP&HC, the tribal historic preservation office and other agencies or organizations as appropriate, to insure that sufficient efforts are made to identify historic resources in project areas, to evaluate them for National Register eligibility, to assess potential impacts and to avoid or lessen the damage that may result from them. Throughout this review process, the consulting parties are directed to consider the input of groups and individuals that may have an interest in the affected resources and the project outcomes.

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The [Rhode Island Historic Preservation Act](#) (RIGL 42:45 et seq.) requires a comparable preservation review for state and local projects and state-permitted activities. The state and local agencies and the RIHP&HC are the primary consulting parties in this process but other public and private groups and interested individuals have the opportunity to participate in the review process. Projects which are entirely private undertakings are not subject to review under these federal or state regulations unless a federal or state permit or license is required.

The RIHP&HC by virtue of its role under these federal and state regulations has reviewed thousands of projects, large and small, to insure that impacts on historic places are minimized. The types of projects reviewed include highway construction, housing rehabilitation and community development among many others. The RIHP&HC has established close working relationships with government officials, state agencies, and federal agencies to insure that consideration for the protection of historic resources is incorporated into the early planning process for government projects. The RIHP&HC and other agencies seek information and opinions from the preservation community concerning regulatory activities and they serves as sources of information and guidance in return. Though the government historic preservation offices are given a primary responsibility in the regulatory process, the involvement and support of the larger preservation community are critical to the overall effectiveness of the regulatory process.

At the local level, a number of Rhode Island cities and towns have adopted planning and zoning regulations to preserve historic resources and community character. Historic district zoning, design review and development review regulations are the principal measures that are used. Historic district zoning, which requires that all exterior alterations and new construction be reviewed and approved by the historic district commission, is one of the most effective forms of preservation regulation. Design review, which is most commonly found in downtowns and business districts, can guide building alterations and new development so that they are compatible with the existing historic building fabric and historic character of the neighborhood. These regulations are generally focused on historic buildings though there are a few significant exceptions where historic district zoning also protects historic landscapes and archaeological features.

Development review generally applies to new construction projects including subdivisions; some communities incorporate a review for potential impacts to significant archaeological sites as well as other historic resources in this regulation. This can provide an important mechanism for the identification and protection of archaeological sites at the local level.

Local governments have also been given the authority by state law (RIGL 23-18) to regulate the preservation of historic cemeteries and burials in their community. The law authorizes the cities and towns (many of which have cemetery commissions) to regulate ground disturbance within 25' of a cemetery, cemetery relocation and the treatment of previously unidentified burials that are discovered.

Under certain circumstances, projects may be subject to preservation review at the local level as well as under federal or state regulation. In these cases, coordination between the local historic district commission, the RIHPH&C and other involved agencies is a high priority, so that the

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least possible damage is done to historic resources and the project reviews are efficiently administered.

5. Providing financial assistance to preservation projects

There are a variety of activities for which preservation organizations and historic property owners may seek financial assistance. They include survey and planning actions at various levels from the single property up through the local, regional and state levels, “bricks and mortar” rehabilitation work, and historic property acquisitions. Historic buildings are the most common recipient of preservation assistance (generally for architectural and engineering services and bricks and mortar work), and certain programs such as tax credits target them exclusively. However, any resource that can qualify for listing on the National and State Registers is eligible to apply for the majority of the assistance that is available.

Grants:

In the 1970s, the preservation funding provided by federal government was at a level that the RIHP&HC was able to provide grants to restore and maintain historic properties, both public and private. The grant program was terminated when federal preservation funding was reduced in the 1980s. More recently, the federal government's efforts to support historic properties with direct grants have been concentrated in a program called Save America's Treasures (SAT). This program is structured so that stewards of historic properties apply directly to SAT for funding, with the grants reserved for those properties that have significance to the nation as a whole. Twenty-five Rhode Island properties received \$8 million through the program, but most of the state's historic properties are not eligible. Since 2011, the SAT program has been unfunded and its future is uncertain.

The federal government also provides some grants for preservation planning. Under the Certified Local Government program, a limited amount of funds are made available each year through the RIHP&HC to support preservation planning activities in Rhode Island communities that have adopted historic district zoning. Other sources of federal preservation grants have included the National Park Service's Preserve America program and the American Battlefield Protection Program.

Preserve America was established in 2003 to encourage local communities to protect and celebrate their heritage; use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization; and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Over half of Rhode Island cities and towns have successfully achieved the status of Preserve America Community.

In 2008, the Commission successfully applied for two grants from Preserve America. This newly created federal program was established to encourage local communities to protect and celebrate their heritage; use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization; and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs.

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The Preserve America grants provided \$125,000 to enable the creation of the *Historic Fort Adams Masterplan*, and \$150,000 to fund the Commission's *Preservation is Local* program to support the efforts of local communities in carrying out preservation activities. *Preservation is Local* began with three regional summits on community preservation planning to identify local needs and goals, and then funded 12 sub-grants to a variety of innovative community preservation planning projects across the state. Unfortunately, federal funding for this program was suspended in 2010.

The American Battlefield Protection Program provides support for efforts to identify and preserve battlefields through the country. The program has awarded several grants for research on Rhode Island battlefields and sites from the Revolutionary War and King Philip's War. The most recent ABPP grant in Rhode Island has been to the RIHP&HC in a research partnership with the Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office and the Blackstone Valley Historical Society to fund an archaeological investigation of the 1676 battlefield at Nipsachuck in North Smithfield and Smithfield.

The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor has periodically offered grants through its Heritage Partnership Program for planning, preservation and education activities in the Blackstone River Valley towns in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. These grants have recently funded improvements to the Blackstone Valley Historical Society facilities at North Gate in the Lime Rock Historic District, Lincoln and the creation of an interpretive trail at Hunts Mills in the Rumford Historic District, East Providence.

When federal funding for preservation projects was curtailed after 1983, Rhode Island responded on a state level. Since 1987 legislative grants have provided some grants for the state's community landmarks. In 1988, Rhode Island voters approved a bond issue that provided \$2.5 million to restore state-owned historic places and to purchase and restore Linden Place in Bristol, one of the state's most important houses.

In 2002 and 2004, the voters of Rhode Island approved state bond issues for historic preservation grants in aid which enabled the Commission to activate the State Preservation Grant program. Between 2003 and 2007, the Commission distributed the \$6 million raised by the bonds through a competitive grant program for restoration of historic buildings used as museums, cultural art centers and public historic sites throughout the state.

The state Department of Environmental Management administers several grant programs, funded by state bond issues, federal funds and other sources. These grants fund historic and passive park restoration and the acquisition and development of land for recreation and open space preservation, categories that can include historic designed and vernacular landscapes and archaeological sites.

The state Department of Transportation administers a Transportation Enhancement Program, authorized and funded by the federal Surface Transportation Program. These grants have awarded to municipalities for a variety of activities related to the environmental impacts associated with transportation projects and facilities; relevant categories include historic preservation, acquisition of easements for scenic and historic sites and the rehabilitation of

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historic transportation facilities. Enhancement grants have assisted a wide range of historic properties throughout the state; however changes in federal transportation funding put the program's future in doubt.

The Statewide Planning Program is also a source for grants to fund planning and implementation studies. State agencies, municipalities, regional planning organizations, and qualified non-profit agencies are eligible for these grants when they are offered.

The need for grants for preservation work is always greater than the funds available. Some private foundations are interested in assisting the preservation of historic buildings and areas, but several million dollars is needed for restoration work on publicly-accessible historic buildings.

Tax credits:

The federal government provides income tax credits for substantial certified rehabilitations of historic buildings which are income-producing. Assisted by these tax credits private investors have undertaken hundreds of rehabilitation projects in Rhode Island. In addition to preserving important buildings, these projects create jobs, provide needed housing, revitalize our main streets and older neighborhoods, and develop properties for office and commercial use.

In January 2002 Rhode Island established its own state income tax credit for substantial certified rehabilitations of historic buildings which are income-producing. This program administered by the RIHP&HC immediately stimulated historic rehabilitation activities across the state, with two hundred and thirty-seven projects undertaken over eight years, representing private investment of \$1.3 billion in twenty-four communities. Unfortunately the state preservation tax credit program was suspended in 2008 in the midst of state budget difficulties.

In 1989, Rhode Island instituted a state income tax credit to help homeowners with the costs of maintaining their historic houses. 1,409 owner-occupants have claimed this credit, which is administered by the RIHP&HC. In 2010 the program was eliminated as part of an overhaul of the state tax law to address state budget difficulties.

Local communities are authorized to provide some property tax benefits to owners of historic buildings, and a few do so. Some communities have made this local tax benefit a cornerstone of their preservation program.

Loans:

Rhode Island's Historic Preservation Loan Fund provides low-interest loans to save and restore historic buildings. This is a revolving fund administered by the RIHP&HC; as loans are repaid, additional projects are funded. Loans have been made in many Rhode Island communities, both to property owners and to communities and preservation organizations which, in turn, lend to property owners. To date, the program has generated 122 loans worth \$7.8 million dollars.

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The Providence Revolving Fund offers two loan programs in specific areas in Providence. The Neighborhood Loan Program provides loans and technical assistance for exterior restoration in designated historic neighborhoods in Providence. Loans include construction specifications, financial project management and construction monitoring by Revolving Fund staff. Loan services are provided on a sliding fee basis, determined by the income of the applicant and/or tenant. The Downcity Fund provides grants and loans to qualified borrowers for projects which enhance the historic character of Downtown Providence and contribute to the vision for Downcity as a diverse arts and entertainment district. Funds may be used for awnings, signage, façade improvements, substantial renovations and new construction. Loan policies and guidelines are established by the Downcity Advisory Board, representing the Providence Revolving Fund and the Providence Foundation.

6. Educational programming and services

Many Rhode Islanders are interested in the historic places they own and live near and in ways to restore and protect them. Each year, Rhode Islanders visit historic buildings and areas throughout the state, sometimes for pleasure and recreation, more often as they carry out their normal daily routines. Some are interested in lectures and presentations, tours, and workshops about their historic areas and buildings. Information and educational resources on Rhode Island's historic resources and their preservation are provided in a variety of ways from many sources.

The RIHP&HC publishes surveys and other materials which assist in decision-making about preservation issues. These reports often provide the most thorough and up-to-date account of a community's historic resources and their place in state history. The RIHP&HC maintains a website which provides these surveys, as well as descriptions of state programs for historic preservation, applications for financial assistance, and the opportunity to query experts and seek advice about a wide range of preservation problems.

For the last twenty-five years the RIHP&HC has sponsored the state's annual preservation conference. Each April more than four hundred preservation leaders and advocates gather for a full day of workshops, panel discussions, networking, and tours. In addition to the annual conference, the RIHP&HC sponsors occasional training workshops for members and staff of local Historic District Commissions.

The RIHP&HC staff also maintains a longstanding commitment to answering individual preservation questions, one by one. Commission staff meet and talk daily with developers, property owners, public officials, and other interested parties to provide expert advice and to assist in planning preservation projects. RIHP&HC staff members regularly respond to requests to address local government boards and historical societies and preservation groups on a variety of preservation topics. The RIHP&HC staff work in cooperation with their counterparts in state agencies and local planning departments to insure that requests for information are referred to the appropriate source.

The Preservation Library, a collection of printed materials about many preservation issues selected by RIHP&HC staff, can be found in 22 libraries and planning offices around the state.

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This collection has been designed to assist homeowners who want help in planning and carrying out the maintenance and repair of their houses in a historically appropriate manner. It should be noted that some of its materials are out-of-date and should be supplemented by new additions. A more extensive and up-to-date preservation research library can also be found at the Providence Revolving Fund (see below).

There are a number of other organizations throughout the state that provide educational services on various aspects of historic preservation. The most active of these are:

- Preserve Rhode Island, the statewide advocacy group, provides several educational services. One of its initiatives is the Historic Sites Coalition, formed to provide the stewards of the state's numerous historic sites with a forum for education, training and the exchange of ideas.
- The Newport Restoration Foundation draws upon its extensive experience in the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic properties to provide practical education on maintaining historic buildings through workshops and its website.
(<http://www.newportrestoration.org/resources/>)
- The Providence Revolving Fund has recently established the Preservation Resource Center at headquarters at 372 West Fountain Street, Providence. There it provides a preservation research library that incorporates audio-visual materials as well as the opportunity for consultations with its professional staff.
- Preserve Rhode Island, the Newport Restoration Foundation and the Providence Revolving Fund have recently joined with Historic New England to form the Collaboration for Common Sense Preservation. The Collaboration has hosted workshops and developed a website, Commonsense Preservation, that provides practical information on maintaining historic buildings and improving their energy efficiency.
(<http://www.commonsensepreservation.org/>)
- Protecting the Past is a collaborative that has been formed to foster alliances for communication and participation between the cultural heritage community and emergency management agencies to prepare, mitigate, respond and recover from events that may adversely impact the cultural resources community in the State. The RI Office of Library and Information Services has formed this coalition with the RI Emergency Management Agency, the RI Risk Manager, the RI Archives, the RIHP&HC and Preserve Rhode Island with support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The group sponsors workshops and online tutorials in developing individual disaster plans for cultural institutions (RIIdPlans), disaster response planning and preparation and in emergency recovery salvage and triage techniques.
- The Providence Preservation Society provides guided walking tours of historic Providence neighborhoods and regularly sponsors both conferences and lecture series on architectural history, urban development and preservation planning.

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- Grow Smart Rhode Island, the state's advocate for smart growth planning, sponsors valuable training programs in land use and effective planning that have benefited planning board members and others involved in land use issues, including historic preservation, in communities throughout the state. Grow Smart RI also hosts an annual conference, The Power of Place, the focus on smart growth and ways in which we can preserve and enhance our sense of place.

7. Supporting local government preservation efforts

Community preservation programs:

Each community in Rhode Island plans for its future by developing, writing, and adopting a comprehensive plan. These plans express a community's civic goals and outline the strategies a community has identified to reach those goals. Included in each of these plans is the community's plan for the future of its historic resources. Most of these plans use the RIHP&HC survey reports and its National Register inventory as a starting point for planning. The plans are developed under the review of the Statewide Planning Program and many of these plans were developed with the participation and advice of RIHP&HC staff members.

The plans are as various as Rhode Island communities, but each addresses at least minimally a number of preservation issues. Some communities have gone far beyond the minimum requirements and have designed community preservation programs which represent a very high level of achievement and which will be effective agents for preservation in their future. Others have designed programs which, while not so ambitious, are suitable for the community's level of interest, awareness, and abilities to participate in preservation programs. Historic buildings and neighborhoods are the most common historic resources in these plans, but they also address historic roadways, landscapes, farms, cemeteries, ancient burials and archaeological sites. In some towns, such as Charlestown which has a strong sense of its archaeological and traditional cultural heritage as the home of the Narragansett Indian Tribe's reservation, the comprehensive plan addresses the need to protect archaeological sites; Middletown's plan includes submerged archaeological resources in the town's waters. Each community's preservation plan is included in its comprehensive plan.

Certified local governments:

One of the most effective steps a community can take to protect its historic character is to establish local historic district zoning. Over one-third of Rhode Island's communities have adopted this protective mechanism. The historic districts in some towns are small; other towns have larger districts, such as Bristol, Newport, North Kingstown, Providence and Warwick, and their commissions are correspondingly busier.

The state enabling legislation for local historic district zoning focuses on buildings and structures and emphasizes the architectural aspects of the regulatory review and local districts are composed primarily of buildings. However, many also include historic open spaces such as

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parks and commons, historic roadways historic waterfronts and other landscape elements that can be subject to commission review. Some districts also include cemeteries; whether in a local historic district or not, the treatment of historic burial grounds is subject to town regulation under the state cemeteries law. This applies to ancient burials of the Narragansett and other Indian tribes as well.

Archaeological resources are not typically included in local historic district review. Many towns provide a limited degree of protection for archaeological sites with their regulations for subdivision and development review. Similarly, historic landscapes may also receive some regulatory protection as scenic and cultural resources under development and design review ordinances. Underwater resources in the coastal communities fall under the jurisdiction of the state and are under the review of the CRMC and the RIHP&HC.

Local historic district zoning has the advantage of having the local community assume the role of protecting its significant historic resources. Local commissions are made up of residents who have volunteered their services and they are able to provide a local face and perspective to this regulatory process. In some larger communities they can rely on trained staff from the planning department for support, while others provide their own support. In all instances, the operation of the local commissions benefits when the members are well-equipped through training and/or experience in the regulatory procedures and the principles and techniques of historical reviews.

A major source of technical assistance and training to local historic district commissions and local planning staffs is the RIHP&HC. This assistance is often provided ad hoc and as needed, but the RIHP&HC also operates a formal training program for local historic district commissioners and staff. These workshops are given regularly at the request of the local commissions to provide essential training for new members and serve as a refresher course for veteran members.

Communities that have adopted historic district zoning and created a local commission with authority to review exterior changes to buildings within an identified zone are eligible to become certified local governments and participate in the Certified Local Governments program established by the National Park Service and administered by the RIHP&HC. Each year, the certified communities are eligible to apply for small grants through a competitive application process. In the past, certified local governments have used these grants to create public education materials, such as brochures and walking tours; to underwrite the cost of National Register nominations; to prepare plans; and to address specific local preservation needs. Each local government identifies its own priorities; the RIHP&HC gives high priority to survey and registration activities, educational and planning programs, the protection of endangered resources and to the community's own priorities as described in its comprehensive plan.

8. Organizing information about historic resources

The RIHP&HC organizes information about historic resources and about preservation activities into 62 separate units, called contexts. These contexts are established to guide our

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understanding of the significance of historic properties and to assist in planning for their preservation. Rhode Island's historic resources span twelve thousand years of our history and range from small archeological sites to large historic districts. In addition, a wide variety of individuals, government agencies, and private groups are involved in preservation. The explicit organization of what we know about these resources improves the likelihood of their preservation. The majority of these contexts are represented by published survey reports and have been completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Planning Standards. Others, such as that dealing with shipwrecks and other underwater cultural resources is still in draft form.

The 62 contexts reflect our understanding of the broad patterns of Rhode Island history. Each context has a geographic and a temporal component—each one deals with a specific time span and place – and it has a theme that unifies the historical materials it covers.

There are six contexts that address archaeological resources associated with Native American society up to the period of European colonization--one deals with the period before 5000 BP; five others address general patterns of land use by Native Americans in the long period between 5000 BP and the mid-17th century. The archaeological resources associated with the colonial period and later are addressed by the city and town contexts.

The contexts dealing with the period after 1636 include 49 which are focused on Rhode Island's cities and towns and some individual neighborhoods in Providence, Newport, Cranston, and Warwick. City, town, and neighborhood contexts are useful mechanisms for understanding the historic significance of particular resources—the RIHP&HC survey is organized through these contexts and our evaluation of the significance of properties uses them as well. There are also several contexts that deal with an individual category of resources on a statewide basis, including shipwrecks and other underwater cultural resources, historic landscapes and historic highway bridges. Except for the underwater resources context, the contexts are represented by published survey reports and are online www.preservation.ri.gov/survey/publications.php.

For each of these contexts, we gather information about resources, produce a history of its development, identify properties included in the context, and sort them by type so that they can be compared with one another, and nominate properties to the National Register. Contexts are updated or new contexts are developed as needed to insure the full range of the state's historic resources can be identified and evaluated.

Contexts also serve to organize information about preservation issues. For each of the contexts, the RIHP&HC regularly gathers information about planning progress. From several program areas, we add information about resources, about current plans, about activities within the context community, and about specific projects. For each context, the RIHP&HC formulates goals. These are sometimes elaborate; at other times, they are limited to a list of properties which are recommended for National Register listing. For each context, the RIHP&HC is able to annually assess its goals and priorities.

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SECTION FIVE: PRESERVATION IN RHODE ISLAND—TOMORROW

1. What we protect

Historic resources are an integral part of nearly every aspect of the Rhode Island scene. They are important to the people of Rhode Island individually - as a home, place of worship or town hall, and collectively - as our neighborhoods, downtowns and countryside. Any plans for preservation must take into account the variety of these resources and the uses which they serve. Considered generally, most historic resources can be grouped into the categories of old houses and neighborhoods, industrial buildings, commercial buildings and downtown centers, public buildings and churches, archeological sites, and landscapes.

Old houses, neighborhoods, and development patterns

The historic houses of Rhode Island are an invaluable resource. Constructed over several hundred years, they represent a variety of styles, materials, living arrangements, and settings. Their presence means that Rhode Islanders can choose from a wide range of living situations which suit their interests, tastes, and means—as various as owning a fine eighteenth-century house to renting an apartment in a handsome three-decker from the early twentieth century.

Living in an historic house can have particular advantages. With appropriate rehabilitation, an historic house can have many of the amenities associated with a new house. Older houses often have larger and more interesting spaces than new houses. If we can keep this variety of age, style, and construction, and provide guidance and aid in dealing with specific issues such as lead paint, energy efficiency and barrier-free accessibility, we will preserve an important part of Rhode Island's unique character.

Most of Rhode Island's historic houses are located in historic neighborhoods—old villages developed around maritime, commercial and industrial enterprises, urban neighborhoods, suburban plats - and a strong reciprocal relationship can benefit homeowners and their neighborhoods. Rehabilitating older houses can preserve and enhance the identity of these neighborhoods and the neighborhoods in turn provide residents with a beneficial environment with convenient access to amenities and transportation routes. Those historic houses built outside of the population centers also play an important role in the identity and sense of place of more rural districts.

Preserving Rhode Island's old houses and neighborhoods will pay important dividends—it strengthens the pride of residents in their communities, their concern for and attachment to their neighborhoods, and their willingness to work for improvements. Nurturing these traditional walkable neighborhoods and protecting them from threats such as disinvestment or inappropriate development can also promote healthier and more sustainable communities.

Apart from all the practical reasons for preserving historic houses and neighborhoods, the very best reason for their preservation is that they enrich the life of our state and give Rhode Island its special character and beauty.

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Industrial buildings

Rhode Island's long history as a center of industry has left the state with a wealth of historic industrial buildings. Located throughout the state, but especially in the urban centers of Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket and in the villages strung along the state's river valleys, these old factories are central to the story of Rhode Island's development. Experience has shown they can also have a role in the state's future economic development.

Only a few of these old factories are used for their original purposes, but many are used by manufacturers of various products, for a variety of commercial enterprises, and for warehousing and storage. While old mills are often considered obsolete and large-scale manufacturers are often reluctant to work in a multi-story factory, locating in a historic mill can be a profitable choice for some. The costs of land and construction for new buildings are high—space in older buildings is still relatively inexpensive. Renovation of an existing building can have advantages—it often takes less time than new construction and can be staged so that production is not interrupted while work proceeds. When an old mill is clearly not useful as a manufacturing site, its open undifferentiated space may be useful for developers of housing, office space, or commercial space. Between 2002 and 2008, a large number of individual mills and industrial complexes were rehabilitated with the assistance of the state and the federal historic preservation tax credits. These projects, spread throughout the state, demonstrated how these buildings can become new engines of community revitalization. Many more mills remain, empty or underutilized, but capable of productive service once more.

Rhode Island's old industrial buildings are frequently the site of ground contamination, making them more difficult to use. Developing and implementing effective and appropriate measures to remediate such "brownfields" are an important component of successful re-use of these sites.

Commercial buildings and downtowns

Rhode Island's historic commercial centers are many in number and exceptional in quality. Providence's downtown, the state's principal commercial center, is a remarkable area, rare among cities of similar size—a cohesive fabric of substantial and beautiful buildings that tell the story of the economic center of an industrializing region. The state's smaller cities and older towns have important downtown areas as well, often a single main street, lined with the handsome commercial buildings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many of the commercial centers give evidence of the pride their builders took in their towns and in their businesses.

Some city and town centers in Rhode Island display a pattern of disinvestment, dilapidation, and vacancy. As with old factories, old commercial buildings may seem to have outlived their usefulness—large-scale, highway-oriented retailing has become the norm—but there is still substantial value to be realized from the preservation of historic commercial centers.

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Important components of the retail sector make use of smaller pedestrian-scale commercial buildings. Neighborhood retailing centers make good use of older buildings. And specialty retailers sometimes find a particular advantage in the use of an older building which serves as a signature and becomes part of a marketing program. Several of the state's most interesting village centers have seen this kind of development.

The growth and change exhibited by the most successful of Rhode Island's older downtowns depends to a great extent on the willingness of the community to take a planning approach which deals with a commercial area as a whole, rather than a piece-meal ad hoc approach. This may sometimes include consideration of mixed use zoning that can allow suitable new uses such as residential to complement and support commercial uses. Good development plans for historic commercial areas can help insure their economic vitality and visual quality.

Public buildings and ecclesiastical buildings

The state's public buildings and houses of worship have a special place in the appearance of Rhode Island's cities and towns. These buildings are important centers of activity; they serve a larger and more diverse community than the single private building; and they are landmarks, often elaborate and impressive, and many times the chief architectural ornament of their area.

As a builder, Rhode Island's state government has produced a remarkable collection of buildings. The most important is the State House, the visual and functional center of the state's executive and legislative branches. But the state has also built important courthouses, arsenals and armories, police barracks, hospitals, prisons, parks, airports, a university and several colleges.

The state's communities have constructed town and city halls, schools, libraries, police stations, fire stations, and public parks, many of them handsome examples of their kind and all illustrative of the important role of the community in daily life.

The state's long history and the diversity of its population has bequeathed to Rhode Islanders an unparalleled assortment of ecclesiastical buildings—meetinghouses, churches, and synagogues. Beyond their self-evident value to those who use them as houses of worship, these buildings are landmarks for their communities, usually prominently sited. And, in their variety of age, size, and style, they document the state's history as a haven for all faiths and as a home to immigrant communities from around the world. Religious buildings can also face serious preservation challenges, such as maintaining their distinctive character despite dwindling congregations or, when no longer needed for religious use, finding new uses that would be appropriate.

As governmental functions change, old public buildings sometimes seem to be a drain on a community's resources. Changes in ownership or use may provide a key to the preservation of such resources. Similarly, demographic shifts may suggest that older religious buildings have outlived their usefulness and no longer justify their costs. But public and ecclesiastical buildings

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are storehouses of community life and they warrant planning and careful forethought before changes in ownership and use are contemplated.

Archeological sites

The archeological sites of Rhode Island are an essential link to an otherwise hidden past that predated or was not represented in the traditional historical sources. They contain a great library of information that can be studied to provide us with direct evidence of the varied facets of material life. Some sites, such as those associated with ceremonial and funerary practices or singular events such as battles, can also possess significance for their continued role in the cultural life of contemporary people.

There are several aspects of our history for which archaeology is an especially important tool. It is of paramount importance as the source of our primary insights into the thousands of years of human history that preceded European colonization and as an essential supplement to tribal knowledge.

Another focus of study and interpretation is the archaeological heritage of Rhode Island's colonial and early national period (c.1600-c.1800). Sites from this period can provide two kinds of information. They contain a record of the daily lives of the ordinary and not-so-ordinary people who made and unmade a colony, made a state, and helped to make the nation. Second, some of these sites contain structural remains that add to what we know about house forms, floor plans, and the pattern of settlements, early commerce and industry. Also included are the early shipwrecks in Narragansett Bay which can provide important insights into maritime history.

Archaeology also adds to our understanding of more recent history, enabling us to hear the voices of people who have been left out of the written record and to recover the facts of daily life which no one thought to record. When the information we gain from these various resources is interpreted and presented as part of the layers that make up our historic landscape, Rhode Islanders can learn about the state's history in new ways—through archeology trails on land and under water, with exhibits, and with brochures and booklets.

Protection of the archeological sites on state lands has achieved a measure of success in Rhode Island as ground disturbing activities are now subject to archaeological review. There have been some noteworthy examples of property owners who have preserved sites on their property, but there is a great need to improve the preservation of archaeological resources on private land.³ Preservation often depends on the ability to locate and evaluate sites that may be subject to destruction. Some Rhode Island communities now review development proposals for their effects on archeological resources, but many more should.

Historic landscapes

³ The National Park Service has developed information on various techniques for preserving archaeological sites at their website *Strategies for Protecting Archeological Sites on Private Lands* at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/pad/strategies/index.html>.

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Rhode Island's landscape legacy is extraordinary. It includes notable examples of formal landscape design, including campuses, picturesque garden cemeteries, estate gardens, golf courses, parks, parkways, and public plazas and open spaces. Another category is vernacular landscapes that reflect the historic patterns of settlement and daily life, such as farmlands, mill ponds and waterways, family cemeteries and historic roadways. A third category encompasses cultural landscapes that have a role in the historical traditions of specific social groups; this includes those important to Native people, which are often dominated by natural features such as hills, stone outcrops, wetlands and ponds. All these landscapes, which are sometimes referred to as heritage landscapes, document long-standing and ongoing efforts to shape and adapt the natural landscape to a variety of human needs and they are integral to our sense of place.

What is particularly noteworthy about Rhode Island landscapes is the way changing needs, tastes, and abilities over the state's long history have created distinctive places across the state. Nowhere else in this country in so contained an area and over a sustained period of almost 400 years can one find such variety and consistently high quality of landscapes, with remaining examples for first-hand examination.

Historic landscapes with naturalistic settings or utilitarian character are often taken for granted, and their design or historic significance is not always readily apparent. Historic landscapes may be regarded as simple open space at best, or, at worst, perceived as undeveloped or vacant—land often considered a development opportunity, not a preservation opportunity. Another important category of landscape – historic farmland – has been endangered by the changing economics of local agriculture. Fifty per cent of the state's active farmland was lost between 1960 and 2000, mostly to suburban real estate development. Only recently has the decline in farms been reversed, but much remains to be done to safeguard historic farmland.

Burial grounds are important features in the Rhode Island landscape, with the most common being small family burial plots with relatively few larger community cemeteries. These often are among the oldest cultural resources in a community and contain a wealth of information about local history. Due to their lack of stewardship, they often suffer from lack of maintenance. With their remote locations, many are little known to the public and poorly documented, though efforts by local historians and genealogists have done much to address the latter problem.⁴ Improved state regulations have given communities more authority to protect these burial grounds, but much more is needed to improve these conditions.

2. Setting our goals

Historic preservation in Rhode Island is founded on our combined private and public efforts to locate, identify, and evaluate all of the state's historic properties and to preserve them in place using both direct measures (such as rehabilitation or acquisition of preservation easements) and programmatic measures (such as historic district zoning or updating the survey). To enhance the effectiveness of these efforts, this plan establishes goals, sets policies to achieve these goals, and identifies actions that will advance the state toward preservation of all historic resources.

⁴ The Rhode Island Cemeteries Database can be accessed online at <http://ricemeteries.tripod.com/index.html>.

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GOAL ONE: LOCATE, IDENTIFY, AND EVALUATE ALL OF RHODE ISLAND'S HISTORIC RESOURCES.

WHAT WE HAVE: For buildings and historic areas, Rhode Island has a solid base for its survey. This was largely developed in the 1970s through the early 1990s by the RIHP&HC, using professional historians and survey methodology that was developed in accordance with National Park Service and RIHP&HC standards. Every community in the state was examined, though there were variations in the level of survey with more intensive survey in communities with the greatest density of historical development and a few that had only a preliminary survey.⁵ The community-based survey of buildings and areas has been supplemented by several thematic surveys. These thematic surveys have covered specific classes of resources that were not adequately covered in the initial survey or required a more intensive focus. Some have been done on a statewide basis, e.g. industrial and engineering resources, historic landscapes, state-owned historic properties, highway bridges, outdoor sculpture, and Revolutionary War sites. Others have been done on a community basis, such as African-Americans in Newport and Providence and agricultural buildings in Foster and Glocester. Properties identified in the survey were studied to the extent necessary for a preliminary assessment of their eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places; some properties were studied to a greater extent.

At present, the existing above-ground survey provides at least basic coverage over the entire state, but much of the survey data is thirty years old, excepting some areas that have been resurveyed recently. The survey's initial emphasis on buildings has been supplemented with information on other classes of resources, collected by thematic survey in some instances, and less systematically for others. There are more opportunities for expanding the survey to explore additional historical themes or categories.

Rhode Island's archaeological resources, by virtue of their hidden nature, have been located and identified to a much lesser extent. To date, over 2500 sites have been identified and included in the RIHP&HC survey. They include sites that are identified by surveys conducted by the RIHP&HC for research and planning purposes, surveys carried out by public agencies and private developers in compliance with preservation regulations, and discoveries by amateur archaeologists or by happenstance. The information contained in the survey is organized by geographic and temporal contexts reflecting the varied environmental conditions and the 12,000 year span in which the archaeological record has been created. The RIHP&HC staff and other trained archaeologists use these contexts, documentary and oral history, and current environmental factors such as soil types and water sources to characterize the nature of the archaeological record across the state, assess the archaeological sensitivity of specific areas and determine whether an archaeological survey is warranted. As archeologists study new sites and research and analyze what has been already found, our understanding of the archaeological dimension of our history steadily expands and new questions and areas of inquiry emerge.

Following identification and preliminary evaluation in the survey, many properties have been nominated to and listed in the National Register (as well as the State Register); about

⁵ Three towns, Exeter, Hopkinton and Johnston, were covered in preliminary reports.

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19,500 properties are currently listed. The National Register nominations for Rhode Island properties are an important source of evaluative information. These documents explain why the registered properties are significant and describe their appearance. Further, the process of National Register listing (which includes an important component of public participation) often serves as an occasion for increased public awareness about the resource. Some archeological sites are also included in the National Register, but the listing of significant sites has not been as high a priority as the evaluation and recording of sites.

WHAT WE NEED: Changes in historical interpretation and changes in technology both mandate that Rhode Island continue to improve and expand its identification and evaluation of historic resources. It is now possible to refine our understanding of historical significance to include a wider variety of properties, if we continue to gather and evaluate information about Rhode Island's resources.

The majority of the past surveys were defined by the geographical and historical contexts of individual cities and towns. More recent survey work has been more thematic, focusing on the resources of a single specific context, sometimes in a limited geographic area (the African – American resources of Newport) and sometimes on a statewide basis (historic landscapes of Rhode Island). Previous surveys performed well in locating resources and identifying basic historical attributes, but collected only a limited amount of information about individual properties. As a result, there are information gaps that need to be filled in. Some early surveys concentrated on the architectural quality of a particular area, with the result that more modest buildings are not well documented. For example, some areas of Newport filled with small vernacular houses should be re-examined for a better understanding of vernacular architecture as well as community development and social history.

The original surveys devoted comparatively little attention to resources of the first third of the 20th century and even less to anything more recent. Supplemental identification and evaluation of pre-World War II resources in the Providence metropolitan area has been accomplished recently; this work should be continued throughout the metropolitan area. Similar investigations of the resources of the mid-20th century have only just begun and require further development. In addition to the recent past, the agricultural heritage and historic rural character of the state are threatened by the decline in farming and associated development pressures. This has created the need to focus more attention on the historic resources of the Rhode Island countryside, including the landscapes, barns and other utilitarian structures of farming and other rural activities.

A number of significant discoveries in recent years also indicate the need to revisit and refine the state's archaeological contexts. The presence of a large 900-year-old nucleated Indian village at Point Judith Pond, expansive Narragansett Indian burial grounds on Jamestown that span thousands of years, and a complex and socially diverse pattern of Indian interior land use at Nipsachuck in the 1600s all provide important new information on archaeological landscapes that needs to be integrated into our existing context statements and used to identify priorities for ongoing survey work.

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In addition to the need for supplemental context and survey work, much of the existing survey information is now several decades old; where there is a particular and specific need for more current information, older surveys should be updated.

Information technology advances and the expanding role of the Web as an information source present new opportunities for organizing and disseminating information on historic resources. This applies to both the exchanges between organizations charged with preservation planning and with the general public. Changes in the ways planning data are used and exchanged have created an opportunity for the wider distribution of the geographical and evaluative information contained in the files of the RIHP&HC. With that comes the necessity to utilize available technology to facilitate that distribution. Several state agencies and local and regional planning agencies need the information at the RIHP&HC that was originally generated as paper files. This survey data needs to be comprehensive and reliable; and it also needs to be accessible in formats such as digital files, electronic databases that can be used in geographic information systems. This allows large amounts of data to be shared efficiently and more easily integrated with other datasets. Conversion of paper files and documents into electronic formats can also make reports, nominations and other resource information available to the public through the Web. Progress has been made in the conversion of existing file data to digital format and the generation of new data in digital as well as traditional formats. (National Register nominations and survey reports are available in digital format on the RIHP&HC website.) In addition, geocoding and other useful attributes for GIS databases are being developed for inventoried resources. However, much more needs to be done.

- Policy A. Survey (and re-survey) the state's historic buildings, areas, archeological sites to include the full range of resources from all periods and areas of significance, to fill in existing data gaps, and to update the RIHP&HC survey as needed. Where feasible, this should be done in partnerships between the RIHP&HC and government, academic and non-profit partners to carry out survey work.

- Policy B. Evaluate known historic resources to determine if they are eligible for the National Register, developing new contexts as needed, especially those that would facilitate the use of multiple property submissions or pertain to endangered resources.

- Policy C. Write and process nominations to the National Register. The RIHP&HC, owners and other applicants work cooperatively to facilitate the process and enhance the use of multiple property submissions to streamline nominations in areas with multiple resources.

- Policy D. Make survey and National Register information available in easily accessible formats to those who need it, coordinating efforts with the state Enterprise GIS system and other Web-based mediums for the dissemination of survey and National Register data.

GOAL TWO: STRENGTHEN THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE WHO OWN, CARE FOR, AND INVEST IN HISTORIC PROPERTIES, AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES TO OBTAIN THE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THEY NEED.

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WHAT WE HAVE: Rhode Island has developed a strong program of technical assistance for owners and stewards of historic resources, but financial assistance has become more limited.

Technical advice on a wide range of preservation issues is available to Rhode Islanders who need it. The staff of the RIHP&HC includes historians, architectural historians, archeologists, and historical architects. Every year they answer thousands of direct questions from residents of the state who need to know more about historic resources and their preservation. The advantages of such a one-on-one approach are clear: questioners receive information as they need it, directed at their particular situation, and at a level of elaboration which is suitable. Technical advice is available from other sources as well including the Providence Revolving Fund, which maintains a preservation resource library, the Newport Restoration Foundation and Preserve Rhode Island. These three organizations have jointly sponsored training workshops in technical preservation topics such as window repair and energy efficiency in historic buildings. In keeping with current trends, the websites of the RIHP&HC and its local preservation partners provide portals where those seeking information can obtain it immediately, such as *Commonsense Preservation, Practical Tips for Rhode Island Old House Owners* (<http://www.commonsempreservation.org/>) or be directed to the sources that can provide it, such as the National Park Service Technical Preservation Services.

Rhode Island developed a remarkable program of financial assistance for several categories of historic resources that was in place by 2002. Income tax credits have been the cornerstone of this program. Federal tax credits for certified rehabilitations of income-producing buildings have made the re-use of hundreds of buildings possible, even profitable. A similar state tax credit that could be combined with the federal credit where appropriate increased the financial viability of rehabilitating and re-using income-producing buildings throughout the state. Another state tax credit has been a historic homeowners' credit. Owner-occupants of historic residences (a substantial part of National Register property owners) have been able to claim a state income tax credit for appropriate exterior maintenance and rehabilitation to their houses. The credit underwrote the (sometimes) higher cost of working on an historic house. Over one thousand Rhode Islanders have been awarded this credit, maintaining their property values and keeping historic neighborhoods well preserved. A fourth element of the program is the Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund, which provides low-interest loans for some development projects. The combined federal and state tax credits program functioned very effectively until 2008. Since that time, the two state income tax credits have been curtailed due to the economic circumstances affecting government finances. Currently the federal income tax credit and the Revolving Loan Fund are the only forms of financial assistance that remain available. In addition to these federal and state incentives, some communities have granted property tax relief to owners of historic properties.

Owners of archaeological sites, historic farmland and other landscapes generally cannot make use of the rehabilitation tax credits but there are some other means of financial assistance. Farmers can be eligible to participate in the agricultural preservation program administered by the RI Department of Environmental Management. Under this program, owners can sell the development rights to their farmland, while retaining it for farm use. Some communities have also reduced the property tax rates for the owners of active farmland. The donation of easements

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that preserve the historic integrity of landscapes, archaeological sites and other types of historic properties can also provide owners with federal tax credits for charitable giving and lower property taxes.

WHAT WE NEED: Rhode Island needs to find ways to encourage more property owners to seek the technical assistance and financial benefits available and find ways to provide financial assistance to properties not now aided, including seeking to restore the state tax credits.

An important group of properties has remained unaided by the program of income tax credits—historic buildings owned by non-profit organizations. This group of properties includes both places operated as restored historic sites (such as the museums located in many communities centered on old houses, schools and mills) and historic properties used by non-preservation non-profit groups to carry out their missions (such as community art centers and the like). While such properties are small in number compared to the total list of National Register properties, they are disproportionately important—they are an important focus of a community's preservation effort and often occupy unusually significant buildings. In many cases, tax credits are not a suitable form of assistance; even low-interest loans may be of little use to an organization which does not generate substantial income. For such properties direct grants are needed. There are private philanthropic funds that on occasion make grants to these non-profit historical institutions. Their efforts are valuable and should be encouraged; however, the need is greater than their capacities and other grant sources are needed. A key source of assistance has been grants have been made possible by state bond issues, such as the 2002 and 2004 Historic Preservation, Recreation, and Heritage Bond Issues which provided \$6 million. Consideration should be given to additional funding in the future.

Owners and stewards of historic properties require accurate and up-to-date information on historically compatible techniques for maintaining and rehabilitating their buildings. In particular, they need to know about best practices for building maintenance and repair, improving energy efficiency and whether new materials or techniques are suitable or not. Other categories of information are needed by owners and stewards of other types of historic resources, such as landscapes, archaeological sites and cemeteries. These include correcting and mitigating the destructive forces of time, nature and human activity that can damage such resources through decay, invasive growth, erosion and other effects.

The state historic rehabilitation tax credit has been identified by Grow Smart Rhode Island as one of the most effective economic development tools that the state has employed. The investment in rehabilitation projects encouraged by the credit stimulated revitalization in communities across the state, while preserving important historic buildings and putting them into productive use. The multiple benefits of the tax credit have been commonly recognized and have engendered support for its reinstatement among a broad constituency.

Policy A. Provide federal income tax credits to eligible rehabilitation projects which are income-producing.

Policy B. Support efforts to reinstate the state commercial and homeowners' income tax credits to stimulate preservation rehabilitation and reuse projects.

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Policy C. Provide loan funding to appropriate rehabilitation and restoration projects.

Policy D. Support efforts to provide direct grants to stewards of properties for which loans and tax credits are not suitable forms of assistance.

Policy E. Provide technical assistance to owners and stewards of historic resources, including the expertise of historic architects and preservation specialists, and monitor new materials and techniques to assess their suitability for historic properties.

GOAL THREE: STRENGTHEN THE PROTECTION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, AREAS, AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES FROM INAPPROPRIATE ALTERATION, NEGLECT, AND DEMOLITION.

WHAT WE HAVE: Rhode Island's program of protection of historic resources from incompatible alterations, deterioration, and demolition has a strong record of success in some arenas and is less successful in others.

Federal and state statutes and regulations provide an important framework for the review of projects proposed by federal and state agencies; the RIHP&HC's survey provides a sound base for the review of the majority of projects where above-ground resources are involved. Due to the limits in the archaeological survey, projects involving ground disturbance in areas sensitive for archaeological resources are more likely to require new survey work so that significant resources in the area of potential effect can be identified. The RIHP&HC and the federal and state agencies whose program activities are most likely to have an impact on historic resources in Rhode Island have developed good working relationships with each other and projects are typically reviewed early in an agency's planning process, which increases the likelihood that adverse impacts can be avoided. Developers and other private property owners who frequently enter the regulatory review process with little or no prior knowledge of its goals and procedures, work directly with the RIHP&HC staff who are experienced in providing appropriate guidance, and also use professional consultants with cultural resource experience, including, architects, historians and archaeologists.

The state building code, an important component of the state's regulatory system for the re-use of historic buildings no longer acts a disincentive for protecting their special character. The Rhode Island Rehab Code (adopted in 2002) helps to insure that those who work on historic buildings need to meet common-sense standards in their work, providing flexibility while promoting high safety standards.

WHAT WE NEED: Building projects carried out by private developers in Rhode Island do not usually undergo the same review as projects which are funded or licensed by federal or state agencies. While some communities protect some of their historic buildings with historic district zoning, many do not. All Rhode Island communities should consider whether and how to protect their resources.

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The lack of local protection can be significant for above-ground resources; for archeological sites it can be disastrous. By their nature, buildings are visible—the RIHP&HC and local preservationists can carry out a dialog with local permitting officials concerning their preservation. In contrast, archeological sites are often not discovered until a building project destroys them. Early consultation about proposed building projects between local officials and the state's archeological experts would help to preserve the state's underground resources. For all archeological sites, Rhode Island's preferred treatment is avoidance; data recovery is sometimes necessary, but usually its cost and the irreversible damage which is done to an excavated site suggest that avoidance is appropriate. Rhode Island's archeological survey is sufficiently advanced that trained archaeologists can assess the sensitivity of a location based on environmental characteristics and documentary and oral history, and an appropriate consultative process need not be burdensome. In the case of the early shipwrecks in Narragansett Bay, the RIHP&HC is developing a management plan that addresses the special conditions that affect them.

While reuse is generally an effective strategy for preserving historic buildings, active reuse is often not appropriate for the preservation of archaeological sites and some kinds of historic landscapes. However, in many cases, these historic resources can be preserved when they are included in natural conservation areas and passive open spaces. This can also apply to developments where archaeological sites can be avoided by including them in the open space areas that are typically mandated. Working cooperatively with the conservation agencies, land trusts and other public and private organizations that acquire and maintain conservation lands or open space, we can increase our ability to safeguard these significant resources.

Through their state and local governments, Rhode Islanders are the owners of some of their state's most significant historic buildings. Many of these historic buildings continue to serve their original purposes; others have been adapted for new uses, by the government or by new owners. Where the government is unable to provide adequate levels of funding for the maintenance and restoration of its historic resources, private groups of citizens who care about a particular resource may help to fill the gap; the Rhode Island State House Restoration Society, the Bristol Statehouse Foundation and, the Fort Adams Trust are good examples. The state should offer support and assistance to such groups.

Even when historic properties are cared for by public or private stewards, they remain vulnerable to disaster both from external forces such as hurricanes, or internal, such as burst pipes or electrical fires. There is a pressing need for those who care for these irreplaceable parts of heritage to receive the training they need to plan and be prepared for these potential emergency situations.

Policy A. Review all proposed actions of the federal and state governments that may have an impact on historic resources and insure that the adverse impacts of such actions are minimized.

Policy B. Work with federal, state and local agencies to develop and implement cultural resource planning tools that will help them fulfill preservation goals.

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- Policy C. Encourage Rhode Island communities to use historic district zoning and other protective mechanisms available to safeguard their historic resources, both above-ground and below-ground.
- Policy D. Work with conservation agencies and land trusts for the preservation of archaeological sites and historic landscapes within protected environmental areas.
- Policy E. Work with state and local government to preserve all historic publicly-owned properties through appropriate use and adequate funding.
- Policy F. Encourage private groups who are willing to support the maintenance and restoration of government-owned properties.
- Policy G. Work cooperatively with emergency managers, emergency responders and property stewards to achieve disaster planning and response preparedness for our historic cultural properties.

GOAL FOUR: BUILD BETTER COMMUNITIES THROUGH HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

WHAT WE HAVE: Historic resources make a fundamental contribution to the make-up of Rhode Island's cities and towns. Historic neighborhoods, civic centers and open space give communities their form and landmark architecture and streetscapes define their character. The distinctive sense of place that our historic resources create is a community asset that can help us insure that the future of Rhode Island's cities and towns is economically vibrant and is filled with a beneficial range of choices for all of us.

Change is an essential element in living and prospering communities and it should not be seen as incompatible with historic preservation. However, failure to preserve the legacy of the past will destroy community identity and our shared heritage. Rhode Islanders today are confronting the results of decades of inadequately restrained land development, results which have affected both our urban centers and our countryside. The state's population has grown modestly, but our consumption of land in the past several decades has increased dramatically. The beautiful farms, forests, and open space of Rhode Island's historic rural towns are being filled with strip commercial developments and low-density residential developments. And our historic urban centers are paying the price—too many neighborhoods are suffering from lack of investment, from deterioration, and from demolitions; older commercial areas are underused; and historic industrial buildings are abandoned. It is increasingly clear that much of this change, in addition to being destructive of historic fabric, is unsustainable in terms of other resources as well.

Rhode Islanders are increasingly demonstrating their desire to change this pattern. Historic preservation can be an important part of our planning for the future. Preservation speaks to much of what Rhode Islanders love best about their state—its beauty, its character, and its unique quality of life. Preservation also helps to address what Rhode Islanders don't love—disappearing farmlands, acres of new housing, and deteriorating neighborhoods in core cities.

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WHAT WE NEED: As Rhode Islanders move toward a better understanding of the relationship of development to their historic buildings and areas, what is needed most is a sense that our existing building stock and historic development patterns are a base from which further development can grow—that their productive use and preservation is primary. The character and vitality of the state's historic cities, villages, and rural areas should not be relegated to a secondary status in planning for the future.

Historic preservation is sometimes thought of as antithetical to progress and growth—it is not. Growth that does not acknowledge the buildings and development patterns of the past will destroy the rich heritage of Rhode Islanders. Planning at each level of government provides the way to manage change and adapt to new social and economic conditions so that our important shared resources continue to enhance our community. This has been recognized in the state's new land use plan, *Land Use 2025: Rhode Island State Land Use Policies and Plan*, which employs an urban services boundary and the concept of “growth centers” to direct development into traditional population centers and away from the state's rural regions. Treating our historic buildings, areas, and development patterns as a primary consideration will keep Rhode Island a desirable place to live and work.

Economic development

Rhode Island development policies should rely on the re-use of buildings in historic areas. We have the principal asset needed for successful development—truly authentic places: city neighborhoods, downtowns, town centers, villages. Our historic districts have all the advantages of their era—they are compact, walkable, bikeable, human-scaled, humane, filled with visual interest. Their infrastructure is in place, and they are often convenient places to live, work, study, and play, with their mix of uses, their access to public transport, and their compact character. Increasingly, these characteristics are being acknowledged as key elements of sustainable and healthy neighborhoods. Above all, their greatest asset is that they are real. In contrast with a landscape of strip malls and housing developments, Rhode Island's old centers have a sense of place, a quality which makes them attractive places to live and work and valuable assets in planning for the future of the state.

Keeping and promoting this sense of place should be a central tenet of economic development. The identification of city neighborhood centers and town and village centers which can absorb additional development is an important first step in preserving these places. Existing incentives can aid developers in the re-use of buildings in older areas; the development of partnerships among state, local, and neighborhood agencies to support development projects will enhance the viability of historic areas.

Heritage tourism

Tourism is an important feature of the state's economy. It should also help to preserve the historic places of Rhode Island. Most visitors tend to see the same small number of historic sites, those which are well marketed and well prepared for large numbers of tourists. Increasing the number of sites which attract tourism and which can address the needs of visitors should be

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an important part of planning for Rhode Island's future. An increase in the number of available and attractive sites will sustain longer visits to the state, increase the number of activities available to visitors, and help to create a small income stream for some of the dozens of small sites which could benefit from increased visitation.

Unfortunately, many of the historic sites which could most benefit from increased visitation are, at present, least able to provide the facilities needed by visitors. To sustain these sites and to increase the number and length of visits to Rhode Island, the state should move toward the principle of product development rather than simply marketing existing resources. Public investment in the creation of visitor amenities (restoration, interpretation, and visitor services) at additional historic sites would pay important dividends in the promotion of tourism and would help to support a number of historic buildings.

Housing

Rhode Island has a shortage of housing, both market rate and affordable houses. Yet the state also has many large historic neighborhoods which need assistance. The historic burst of housing construction which occurred in the state in the half-century between 1870 and 1920, to accommodate a growing population drawn by the industrializing economy, together with some earlier and later housing booms, has given Rhode Island many large areas of livable pleasant neighborhoods. These areas--city neighborhoods, old villages, suburban plats—are an important resource in Rhode Island's commitment to insuring an adequate housing supply. Old neighborhoods and existing houses should have primacy in the housing policies of the state and its communities.

Renovation of older houses and preservation of old neighborhoods can be less of a strain on a community's resources than new construction, since the infrastructure of utilities and services is already in place and need not be created anew. Good renovation of old buildings can raise property values as much as new construction. In urban areas, the development of housing in targeted old neighborhoods has demonstrated that the goal of preservation can help achieve the goal of affordable housing.

The re-use of non-residential buildings for housing now has a long history of success in Rhode Island. Many communities have renovated outdated schools, old mills, even vacant churches, into new housing. They increase their housing stock and preserve buildings which are important to the community but have outlived their original use.

Brownfields

Rhode Island has important stock of historic mills. Many of the great mills of the Blackstone and Pawtuxet Valleys have outlived their original manufacturing use, but they remain a substantial resource for the state and their towns and cities. Visually, they dominate their communities. Historically, their significance cannot be overstated. They represent an enormous investment of resources which is wasted when they are demolished or unused. Between 2001 and 2010, thirty-six historic mills were rehabilitated with historic tax credits, representing an investment of \$700 million. Many more still remain, vacant or under-used

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These old mills can have a future; they can be used for manufacturing, for housing, for office parks. Their large undifferentiated spaces can house any number of uses, depending on the needs of their communities and the requirements of their developers. But many old mills sit on sites which have been contaminated by pollutants over the decades of their use. These brownfield sites are a deterrent to redevelopment and reuse of this important property type. The provision of state incentives to clean up such properties would help to preserve them.

Green Space

There are numerous opportunities throughout Rhode Island where the preservation of historic landscapes and archaeological sites provides the additional environmental benefit of open space conservation. Open spaces often have significant historic and archaeological aspects, from pre-colonial settlement through later eras of farming, rural industry and urban and suburban park development. There are important advantages that can result when historic and natural resource preservation efforts are joined together. Green space proposals can have a broader appeal when they combine preservation and conservation and offer greater benefits. Interpretation and appreciation of natural and cultural resources can be enhanced when the two are integrated and historic landscapes can provide beneficial animal and plant habitats that are in decline.

Local Preservation

Rhode Island towns and cities need support, both financial and technical, to grow better. The planning "toolbox" of legal and financial mechanisms to support the continued use of historic buildings and areas should have a wide variety of choices. It is especially important that communities be able to adapt their historic district zoning to their particular needs; there is already considerable variation in ordinances and enforcement policies—such variety should be supported as it fosters a wider adoption of preservation measures. In addition, communities need encouragement and assistance in developing a range of planning, zoning and incentive programs that support historic preservation. The communities that already have programs of this type in place also need encouragement and support to keep them functioning smoothly and effectively.

Policy A. Incorporate support for the preservation of existing buildings, sites, landscapes, and development patterns in the planning strategies for economic development, tourism, housing, brownfield remediation, education and open space conservation.

Policy B. Provide technical and financial assistance to communities that protect historic resources by establishing local preservation programs and encourage other communities to develop and adopt such protections.

Policy C. Work with local communities to strengthen existing financial, legal, and planning tools to encourage preservation and developing new ones as needed.

Policy D. Assist local communities by developing new financial, legal, and planning tools to encourage preservation.

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Policy E. Work in cooperation with Rhode Island Statewide Planning, the RIHP&HC, other government agencies and local preservation groups to enhance the incorporation of preservation planning into individual agency plans and community comprehensive plans.

Policy F. Strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones with organizations that pursue similar goals of appropriate reuse and conservation of built and natural resources.

GOAL FIVE: INCREASE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUES OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS, AREAS, AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES AND THE BENEFITS OF THEIR PRESERVATION.

WHAT WE HAVE: Communication with all Rhode Islanders about their historic resources has always been an important component of the state's historic preservation program. Through publications, tours, conferences, workshops and lectures, members of the public and smaller groups with special needs for knowledge are kept informed.

RIHP&HC survey publications, fact sheets, website, and the Preservation Library serve a broad public, as does the annual statewide conference. Members of local historic district commissions and their staffs receive specialized training and presentations about the National Register, zoning and historic district commission best practices. Specialized audiences may attend workshops on particular subjects of interest, such as accessibility issues or tax credit questions.

Several communities have made educational efforts an important part of their local preservation program, using walking tours, plaques and markers, and lecture programs as ways of conveying the importance of historic resources and the RIHP&HC has provided support and technical assistance for their efforts. The RIHP&HC has also worked with federal and state agencies to develop interpretive signage, exhibits and other types of public educational features for historic resources, often as components in Section 106 mitigation. Recently, the RIHP&HC helped to fund interpretative panels along a section of heavily-traveled East Bay Bike Path.

WHAT WE NEED: Rhode Island should insure that each person who needs information about some aspect of historic preservation receives the information in a form which is usable and suitable, whether her need is for specialized advice on a technical or financial matter or for a more general understanding of the role of historic buildings, landscapes and other areas in our communities' lives. To insure that information is available in a suitable format, we will need to continually assess the impact of information technology on the information we provide.

Rhode Islanders need to know that historical preservation can have an impact on the quality of our environment; that preservation can increase the choices available to all Rhode Islanders; that living in an historic community is not a luxury for the affluent but an entitlement for all Rhode Islanders; and that preservation principles can be a practical and economical basis for making decisions about the future of historic properties, from individual buildings to

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neighborhoods and Main Street commercial districts to farmland. In short, Rhode Islanders need information about the "why" of historic preservation as well as the "how."

Some Rhode Islanders also need specific information targeted to their special interests and requirements, especially government officials, architects, engineers, lawyers, environmental scientists, planners, and realtors. These professionals are a specialized audience with special needs for information, since they often make or share in preservation decisions. They need information in formats which are matched to their needs.

Publications have been at the core of the Rhode Island's public information strategy—books, booklets, fact sheets and brochures on many topics have been produced over the last few decades. The high cost of paper publications and the difficulty with updating them suggest that we should concentrate publication efforts on the internet. The RIHP&HC website now offers all survey reports for download, as well as new and proposed National Register nominations. The state's National Register inventory is also accessible online for limited searches. While there remains the need for traditional paper documents and person-to-person communication, the web is increasingly the preferred medium for the distribution of information and reports.

Policy A. Strengthen all aspects of preservation education, to insure that information is available in a timely, appropriate, and expert fashion and available in the most efficient and accessible ways.

Policy B. Increase public education about historic resources and their preservation in methods that are individually designed to meet the needs of specialized audiences.

Policy C. Provide technical assistance and training for local preservation officials and preservation advocates.

Policy D. Focus general public education efforts on mechanisms which explain the values of historic resources and their preservation.

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SECTION SIX: USING, ALTERING, AND REPLACING THIS PLAN

1. Using the plan

This plan is designed for the people of Rhode Island, their state government officials, local planning agencies, and the National Park Service (which provides major funding for the state historic preservation program). The plan is a revision of earlier plans, the latest from 2002. This plan will serve until 2018. The plan has been reviewed by the National Park Service, the Division of Planning, Rhode Island Department of Administration, and it has been posted for review by the general public on the RIHPH&HC website.

The plan is designed to summarize the state of historic preservation in Rhode Island and provide an outline of how we should best direct our preservation efforts over the next five years. The plan seeks to identify the actors and the means by which preservation is carried out, the state of our progress in defining what we preserve and how we preserve it and the present challenges and opportunities we face as we work in our various ways to protect our state's heritage. The plan puts forth a set of goals that would direct, broaden and strengthen our preservation capabilities; each goal is accompanied by policies that provide specific activities that can advance us to our goals.

Historic preservation in Rhode Island is carried out in many ways by many people, acting individually and collectively in a variety of public and private organizations. They include the public agencies and others who have a mandated role in the federal and state preservation programs, preservation professionals, preservation advocates and the stewards of historic properties from the historic site museum to the private home. This plan is intended for all of them, to provide a clarification of our basic purposes and methods, a structure into which their preservation efforts can fit, and a set of strategies they may employ to help achieve their individual and our shared goals. It also provides an introduction and overview to those who seek to know more about the functioning of preservation in Rhode Island.

The goals and strategies are not necessarily equally applicable to all users. However, they are intended as a whole to guide the work of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission each year. As the RIHP&HC prepares its annual work program for each year and evaluates its end-of-the-year report, the Commission staff consults the plan to insure that each task set out in the work program advances one of the goals and adheres to the policies laid out here. Other state agencies and local officials will consult this plan too as they prepare their own plans and programs to insure that no conflict occurs among the goals and policies of the state's several agencies and to insure that local comprehensive plans do not conflict with state plans.

Despite the state's small size the preservation movement in Rhode Island is an intensely particularized and localized effort. One of the strengths of the state's preservation program in the past has been its ability to match the development of the professionally staffed central office with the development of myriad efforts by Rhode Islanders in every community to save particular buildings and sites and to create protective mechanisms for historic resources in their community government. This partnership between the RIHP&HC and staff, guided by sound preservation principles, and Rhode Islanders in their communities, guided by their appreciation of the

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particular character and quality of the places in which they live, is a substantial asset. The plan seeks to protect that and gives due consideration to the particular needs and concerns of community preservationists.

The plan's goals and policies have been designed to define definite courses of action that will effectively address conditions in the immediate future. It is to be expected, however, that new information will be generated and new circumstances will arise that could revise our understanding of historic resources and their significance, and modify preservation priorities. Therefore, the plan avoids too high a level of specificity.

2. Altering and replacing the plan

This plan is evaluated on an annual basis by the RIHP&HC to determine if the conditions to which it responds have changed sufficiently to require alteration of the plan. The evaluation is carried out by RIHP&HC staff and commissioners and by other Rhode Islanders who participate in the process when they comment on the annual work program or the plan itself. When soliciting suggestions for the annual work program each year, RIHP&HC examines suggestions to determine whether they indicate that a change to the plan may be necessary. If conditions have changed to such a degree, alterations and amendment of the plan will be undertaken by the RIHP&HC, which will solicit input from public agencies and private entities involved in preservation and the general public. The annual evaluation of this plan includes suggested or planned changes to its overall structure and components when replacement is due in 2017.

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APPENDICES

1. How This Plan Was Prepared
2. Bibliography
3. An Overview of Rhode Island History
4. Sources of Information About Historic Resources and Preservation in Rhode Island
5. RIHP&HC Annual Work Plans and Significant Accomplishments
6. Preparing a Community Historic Preservation Plan

**SAVING FOR THE FUTURE
A STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN FOR RHODE ISLAND**

APPENDIX 1

HOW THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED

This revision of the Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Plan (Plan) was prepared by the staff of the RIHP&HC. The assistance and input of others was sought as described below and used as appropriate and necessary, but the RIHP&HC conducted the study, revision, and writing of the plan.

EXTENT OF REVISION

The Plan as revised is a refinement rather than a reorganization of the RIHP&HC planning process. The prior plan has performed well as a useful and efficient method of organizing information about historic resources and setting forth guidance for preservation activities. Given this fundamental effectiveness, the goal has been to update data and adjust goals and policies to reflect conditions that have changed and accommodate new circumstances.

REVISING THE PLAN AND PREPARING AMENDMENTS

The process of revising Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Plan began in 2009 with a staff assessment of the 2002 State Historic Preservation Plan and its effectiveness as a guide to the state's preservation efforts over the previous seven years. Concurrently, the RIHP&HC initiated a statewide preservation planning initiative – Preservation Is Local – that was designed to solicit public input on the state of preservation in Rhode Island cities and towns and stimulate discussion on the state's preservation issues, threats and opportunities.

Under the aegis of Preservation Is Local, the RIHP&HC held three regional summits in Spring 2009: at Pawtucket for Providence County; Bristol for Bristol and Newport Counties; and South Kingstown for Kent and Washington Counties. For each summit we convened a group from that region that included the town planners, local historic district commissioners, leaders in preservation societies, land trusts and community development organizations, historians, archaeologists and other preservation professionals and historic property owners and managers. In preparation for the summits we asked all the invitees to complete a survey on the current state of historic preservation with an emphasis on the local community.

The discussions at the summits were led by RIHP&HC staff together with representatives from our principal statewide preservation partners: Preserve Rhode Island; Grow Smart RI; the RI Department of Environmental Management; RI Statewide Planning; the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission; and the RI Historical Society. Through the use of discussion leaders, each summit touched on salient preservation topics including: survey and registration of historic properties; planning and land-use issues; local historic district commissions and zoning; historic property management; and heritage tourism and education. The summit participants' feedback was extensive and useful and their survey responses and multifaceted discussions provided valuable insights that have informed the revised plan.

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Supplementing the public input from the Preservation Is Local summits, the RIHP&HC solicited comments for the state preservation planning process from representatives of relevant federal and state agencies, nonprofit groups and a wide range of other interested organizations and individuals, utilizing the RIHP&HC electronic directory and e-mailings, as well as direct contacts. This was followed by conversations, correspondence and individual meetings with various groups and individuals.

The RIHP&HC staff then completed the revision of the Plan utilizing the collected data and received input. The draft revised Plan was then made available in July 2011 through the posting on the RIHPH&C website and comments were once again invited from all those who had been contacted previously, using the RIHP&HC electronic directory and e-mailings. Provisions were also made to provide the draft Plan in hard copy upon request. Upon review of comments received, the Plan was finalized....

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A STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN FOR RHODE ISLAND**

APPENDIX 2

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Rhode Island Historic Preservation Plan (1996)
Rhode Island Historic Preservation Plan (2002)
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Town, City and Statewide Survey Reports:

Barrington
Block Island

Bristol
Burrillville

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Central Falls
Charlestown
Coventry
Cranston
 also: Pawtuxet Village
Cumberland
East Greenwich
East Providence
Exeter
Foster
Glocester
Hopkinton
Jamestown
Johnston
Lincoln
Little Compton
Middletown
Narragansett
 also: Narragansett Pier
Newport:
 African-Americans of Newport
 Kay-Catherine-Old Beach Rd.
 Southern Thames Street
 West Broadway
North Kingstown

North Providence
North Smithfield
Pawtucket Portsmouth
Providence (Citywide)
 also: Downtown
 East Side
 Elmwood
 Providence Industrial Sites
 Smith Hill
 South Providence
 West Side
Richmond
Scituate
Smithfield
South Kingstown
Tiverton
Warren
Warwick
 also: Pawtuxet Village
West Greenwich
West Warwick
Westerly
Woonsocket

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Element 140: State Historical Preservation Plan (1996)⁶

Element 155: A Greener Path; Greenspace And Greenways For Rhode Island's Future (1994).

⁶ Element 140 has become outdated and is being updated in the near future to incorporate updates referenced in this plan.

SAVING FOR THE FUTURE
A STATEWIDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN FOR RHODE ISLAND

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APPENDIX 3

AN OVERVIEW OF RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

In April 1524 Giovanni da Verrazano sailed into Narragansett Bay and dropped anchor near what is now Newport, Rhode Island. Verrazano's visit was the first recorded contact between Europeans and Indians living around Narragansett Bay. His narratives describe Indian culture before European colonization altered Indian lifeways. Verrazano's two-week visit was a critical moment in Rhode Island's history. It began the process of European exploration and colonization that dramatically changed lands that had been Indian for more than 12,000 years.

The Indians that Verrazano described in 1524 were either Narragansett or Wampanoag. They were horticulturists, growing legumes and corn, supplementing this diet with hunting, fishing, and the gathering of nuts, berries, and other plants. Verrazano described extensive clearings and an open woodland uncluttered by today's common mixture of briars, poison ivy, and immature undergrowth. The landscape had been formed by generations of Indian people alternately burning, planting, and harvesting domestic and wild plants. Burning maintained the soil's fertility, and created open areas where blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries grew in abundance. The practice of moving fields and burning the growth created a mosaic of environments that provided browsing areas for deer and a diverse habitat for other animals used for food and clothing.

This horticultural way of life and rich estuarine environment described by Verrazano had emerged from thousands of years of cultural and environmental change. Indian people had lived in the area for at least 12,000 years prior to Verrazano's visit. Over these millennia substantial changes occurred in the physical environment and in the way Indian groups used the land. By 15,000 B.P. (before the present) the glacial ice sheet began to melt and retreat to the north, beginning the process of transformation from a colder, open spruce woodland environment to a warmer deciduous one. The release of glacial meltwater caused sea levels to rise, transforming a freshwater environment to a saltwater one. The modern estuarine environment was fully formed 3500 years ago. During most of this period Indians were hunter-gatherers, maintaining their livelihoods from riverine and estuarine resources. Between 2700 B.P. and A.D. 1200 domestic crops such as corn, beans, squash, and pumpkins were introduced from the south.

Archaeologists commonly divide the 12,000 years prior to Verrazano's visit into time periods that correspond to cultural and environmental changes. Our understanding of these years is only partially based upon data from Rhode Island. Archaeological sites dating from 5000-6000 B.P. are very rare in Rhode Island. Sites dating after 2,500 B.P., however, are more abundant. Data from these sites have made important contributions to understand the history of Indians in Southern New England.

PALEO-INDIAN PERIOD, 12,500-10,000 B.P.

This period represents the earliest arrival of humans into the northeast following the retreat of the last glaciation. By 13,500 B.P. the southern extent of the ice front stood along the northern boundaries of Connecticut and Rhode Island, opening most of the state to colonization

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by tundra flora. The plant community provided food for animals such as caribou, mammoth, and mastodon so that by 12,500 B.P. the region could support small bands of Paleo-Indian people.

At this time, the land mass of southern New England was much more extensive and the landscape very different. Narragansett Bay was a system of freshwater rivers, with the coastline location 80 miles southeast of Providence. Block Island would not have been an island, but rather a high prominence on an otherwise level coastal plain.

The environment was changing rapidly. As the ice continued its northward retreat, more temperate plant communities were established and greater inundation of coastal areas occurred. By 12,000 B.P. tundra vegetation had given way to spruce, birch, jack pine, and red pine, and the large mammals such as mammoth and mastodon were replaced by elk and caribou.

The characteristic Paleo-Indian artifact was the fluted point, part of a tool kit designed to be quickly portable for hunting migratory animals. Paleo-Indians probably moved in small hunting bands that followed migratory animals, taking advantage of other wild foods along the way. Because the Paleo-Indian environment was changing rapidly, dependable fish runs, tidal mud flats, and other long-term predictable locations of food resources were unestablished. The Paleo-Indians adapted to this environment by living in small groups and following the moving herds of animals.

ARCHAIC PERIOD, 10,000– 2,700 B.P.

Broadly defined, the Archaic Period marks a change in environment, adaptation, and artifact styles. The period extends to the first use of clay-fired ceramics and is divided into four sub-periods corresponding to environmental and cultural changes.

EARLY ARCHAIC PERIOD, 10,000-8,000 B.P.

During this period, plant communities became more complex. The deciduous forest moved north, and by 9,000 B.P. oak was established in Rhode Island. Sea levels were still rising, and had just begun to form Narragansett Bay. The environment was becoming more stable, diverse, and predictable, and the Indian subsistence base broadened to take advantage of these new conditions. With the decline of the migratory animals that had characterized the Paleo-Indian period, groups began to develop a stronger sense of territory and became more committed to their local environments. In fact, fewer exotic lithics, indicative of extensive regional exchange, occur at Early Archaic sites. Instead, greater use is made of local quarts and quartzite.

MIDDLE ARCHAIC PERIOD, 8,000-6,000 B.P.

During this period the deciduous forest became well established. By 6,000 B.P. the 20 percent oak isopoll had moved into southern New Hampshire and Vermont, and southern New England was characterized by an oak-hemlock forest. Sea levels continued to rise. By 7,500 B.P. salt water had advanced into the lower West and Sakonnet Passages of the bay; by 6,250 B.P. the West Passage was nearly flooded, although much of the upper bay's western side and all of the Sakonnet River Valley were still land.

The settlement system became more elaborate, the range of activities increased and sites became more specialized. Further evidence suggesting that the period represented an elaboration

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of the earlier tendency to focus on local resources is suggested by continued emphasis upon local stone materials.

LATE ARCHAIC PERIOD, 6,000-3,700 B.P.

During this period essentially modern conditions for vegetation emerged and Narragansett Bay fully developed. Rates of sea level rise tapered off considerably from 17mm/yr. at 12,000 B.P. to less than 3mm/yr. by the end of the period. Although by 4,750 B.P. the west side of the upper Bay remained unflooded and Dutch Island was still attached to Conanicut Island, by 3,500 B.P. the salt water cove at the juncture of the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers had been formed.

Sites of this period reflect the mast forest environment and stabilizing estuarine environment. Grinding implements indicate greater reliance on vegetable foods—seeds, nuts, berries, and roots. Deer was the major game animal. Fishing was important, with weirs established at prominent migratory locations. Toward the end of the period shellfish appear in coastal sites.

Sites occur in a variety of local environment settings, and the local use of stone materials continues with little reliance on outside exotic lithics.

Mortuary sites are recorded for the first time, with cremation burials occurring just outside of Rhode Island in the Taunton River drainage at the Bear Swamp and Wampanucket sites.

TERMINAL ARCHAIC PERIOD, 3,700-2,700 B.P.

This period is culturally dynamic, with regional population movement hypothesized, related either to population growth or migrations from the west.

Characteristic of this period are stone bowls shaped from steatite, known commonly as soap stone. While seasonality and the use of coastal and interior resources continued to be an important factor in this period as in preceding periods, the use of these heavy cooking vessels implied reduced mobility. Regionally, Rhode Island was an important soapstone production center, with quarries located in what is now Cranston, Johnston, and Providence. Soapstone was used for ceremonial and utilitarian purposes, and the material occurs as grave goods in cremation burials on Conanicut Island and in refuse middens throughout the state.

WOODLAND PERIOD, 2,700 B.P. –A.D. 1524

This period begins with the use of clay-fire ceramics. It is the period best documented by radio-carbon dating. Of the approximately seventy-five Rhode Island sites that have been radio-carbon dated, the majority date to this period. Regionally, horticulture was adopted and domestic plants integrated into the hunting, gathering, and fishing subsistence base.

The extent of change in Indian land use prior to Verrazano's visit in 1524 is poorly understood, but the general strategy of seasonal movement from interior wintering areas to coastal summering areas and the use of domestic crops he observed had probably persisted for sometime. Large nut storage pits at a site in North Kingstown dating back to 2000 B.P. suggest a preadaptation to maize horticulture. The prominent place of corn, beans, and squash in

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seventeenth-century Narragansett mythology and calendrical ritual suggest a long, albeit undocumented traditional involvement in maize cultivation. Thus far, the only documented use of maize in Rhode Island is from a Contact Period component at Fort Ninigret in Charlestown. In southern New England the earliest date is A.D. 1200, from Martha's Vineyard. The evidence for any early or widespread reliance on maize is overwhelmingly negative. Understanding the emergence of horticulture is a critical research question in this region.

In addition to probable changes in subsistence and economy with the emergence of horticulture, mortuary practices also change with the apparent abandonment of cremation burials in favor of multiple and single primary interments.

When Verrazano visited in 1524 he described an Indian land system based upon seasonal movement. Approximately 120 years later Roger Williams elaborated upon Verrazano's narrative, observing that Indian families would establish garden plots along the coast in the summer and come together in the winter in sheltered inland areas. Although seasonality was probably the basis of Indian land use since at least the Middle Archaic, what Williams and Verrazano described was not what existed throughout Indian history.

Apart from the emergence of horticulture after 2700 B.P., climatic variations may have affected the abundance of various plant and animal species that in turn could have altered subsistence and settlement practices. Marine temperatures for example, have fluctuated, affecting the abundance of shellfish. After the early Archaic, ocean temperatures began to warm until they became warmer than today at the end of Terminal Archaic. Temperature then began to cool, reaching a low point around A.D. 1000, after which the water warmed steadily to present levels. These fluctuations as well as variations in land temperatures and precipitation must have affected settlement strategies, perhaps even negating the need to "winter-over" during the Terminal Archaic. An understanding of this basic but complex and changing relationship between environment and culture through millennia of Indian history is fundamental. The history of Indians is sometimes written as if the emergence of horticulture were inevitable—an ultimate goal that was achieved after thousands of years of experimentation, diversification, and climatic amelioration. Such was not the case. In fact, for many cultures the introduction of maize, beans, and squash led to increased disease and lower nutrition levels. Given the bountiful resources of the Narragansett Bay Basin, the Indians of southern New England may not have relied heavily on domestic crops. Evidence from North Kingstown of large storage facilities for wild foods around 2000 B.P. shows a technological capability to store large quantities of food. The move to horticulture would have been a minor and perhaps reversible technological step.

EUROPEAN DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION, 1524-1636

This period begins with Verrazano's written observations of his exploration in Narragansett Bay and ends with Roger Williams' settlement at Moshassuck [Providence] in 1636. This is the period when the first substantial effects of Europeans contact were felt by New England tribes: disease, the beginnings of land encroachment, and the resultant ecological and cultural alteration of the land. Indians living around Narragansett Bay, the Wampanoags and Narragansett were little affected by the Europeans until 1616, when a severe epidemic decimated Indians living along the coast from Maine to Cape Cod, including the Wampanoags. Although the Narragansetts were physically unaffected by the epidemic, the catastrophe stimulated an intensification of their religious practices and increased their power and influence throughout the region. The Pokanoket band of Wampanoags led by Massasoit also known as Ousamequin

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provided critical aid to the colonists on the eastern shore of Narragansett Bay. In this initial stage of European contact, the power and prestige of Rhode Island's Indian population was increased.

After 1620, European settlers increasingly influenced Indian culture and drew Native Americans into aspects of their socioeconomic system. One illustration of this is the way that European commercial practices modified the status and use of wampum, cylindrical shell beads made from quahog and whelk. Wampum was rare and exceedingly valuable outside the coastal Indian settlements. The Europeans noted its value and transformed the cylindrical shell beads from a purely ceremonial to a secular commodity, using the wampum produced in southern New England as a form of currency to purchase furs from interior Indian groups. With the burgeoning demand for wampum, local Indians were induced to produce the beads for Europeans; concurrently, wampum fueled the Atlantic fur trade and helped to promote and sustain the success of early European traders and colonists.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, EXPANSION, AND INDUSTRIALIZATION, 1636-PRESENT

Rhode Island Indians began to feel serious and irreversible effects of European colonization in the 1630s. The Narragansett sachem Miantonomi's 1641 oration to the Montauk Indians of eastern Long Island urged Indians to unite against the colonists and recalled the less stressful, more bountiful days prior to European colonization. Miantonomi noted in particular the loss of Indian lands and the transformation of the landscape from one which supported Indian horticulture to one that could not. The United Colonies arranged to have Miantonomi killed shortly after making that speech. The older sachem, Canonicus, also died in the 1640s. The loss of both sachems and subsequent ascendancy of several sachems marked an apparent splintering of tribal leadership and a breakdown in the long-standing practice of rule by dual sachems. The proliferation of sachems following the deaths of Miantonomi and Canonicus was encouraged by colonial trading and land acquisition activities, and it reduced the ability of the tribe to reach consensus on matters of land sale, colonial trade relations, and intertribal affairs. Moreover, Narragansett males were involved in a variety of tasks that were tied to the colonial economy: they produced wampum, carried messages to Plymouth, tended colonial cattle, and built stone walls for colonial settlers.

While the relationship between the indigenous tribes and colonial Rhode Islanders was sometimes mutually advantageous, it was predominantly tense and fragile. Massasoit had maintained a delicate harmony between the English and the Pokanokets, but following his death in 1661 his sons, Wamsutta, and then Metacom or Philip, came under increasing pressure to relinquish territory to the colonists. The relationship had begun to deteriorate in the 1650s, and it finally collapsed with the outbreak of King Philip's War in 1675. While the Wampanoags were at the center of the initial hostilities, the Narragansetts attempted to stay out of the conflict but were invaded by the United Colonies under the pretext of forcing the Indian sachems to return Wampanoag war refugees. The United Colonies and their Indian allies militarily defeated the Wampanoag and Narragansett Indians in 1676. Surviving Indians were sold into slavery, moved west, or settled with the Niantic..

Following King Philip's War, the Pokanoket and Narragansett lands were settled, and the formation of Rhode Island towns proceeded. Most towns began as agricultural settlements based on subsistence family farms. Within a few years, many farms were able to produce a surplus which could be sold, and in the southern part of the state some large commercial farms were established with labor supplied by Indian and African slaves. Merchants exported the agricultural

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products of the hinterland in the initial phase of development of a complex maritime trading network. Rhode Island's access to the ocean was unsurpassed among the New England colonies, and contributed to the rise of maritime trade. By 1774, twenty-nine towns had been established, of which two-thirds bordered Narragansett Bay or Block Island Sound. The importance of the bay is reflected in the establishment of numerous coastal fortifications, lighthouses, and life-saving stations in Rhode Island.

Maritime commerce grew robust in the eighteenth century, led by Newport and Providence and supported by smaller coastal and interior towns. Among the mainstays of shipping were the coastal carrying trade—which transported local produce from port to port along the Atlantic seaboard—and the so-called West Indies “triangle” trade. The staple West Indian products of sugar and molasses were brought to Rhode Island to be converted into rum at shore-side distilleries. The rum was shipped to the coast of Africa where it was traded for slaves, who in turn were shipped to the West Indies to work on the sugar plantations. Other important maritime activities included ship building and manufacture for export of lime, iron goods, and spermaceti candles. The single most lucrative form of commerce involved the importation of manufactured goods from England and Europe, but this also required the greatest investment in ships, warehousing, and cargoes. Thus, this type of trade was generally carried on in conjunction with the coastal or triangle routes.

The Revolutionary War altered trade patterns and reduced the socioeconomic supremacy of Newport in Rhode Island. Providence, however, emerged with its ships, fortunes, and merchant fleet intact. Profitable trade was conducted with China, South America, the West Indies, and Europe. Rhode Islanders exported local provisions to South America; they sent Oriental tea and textiles and South American rum, tobacco, and coffee to Europe; they traded Iberian specie to China; and they imported European manufactures, Baltic naval stores and iron, and Oriental goods for domestic consumption. Smaller ports also prospered in trade and fishing, including Bristol, Warren, East Greenwich, and Wickford.

Capital accumulated through maritime commerce facilitated the state's industrialization. At the same time that maritime prosperity was reaching its height in the late 1780s and the 1790s, merchant Moses Brown organized a company to manufacture cotton textiles in Pawtucket. Under the direction of Samuel Slater, water-powered factory spinning of cotton yarn commenced on December 20, 1790, and the American Industrial Revolution began.

During the first decades of the nineteenth century other merchants began to divert funds from maritime to industrial enterprises. Roads and turnpikes were laid out, facilitating the movement of goods between hinterland and port and also providing access to water-power sites in the interior. During the early nineteenth century, mills were established throughout the Blackstone and Pawtuxet River Valleys and along the state's other waterways. This industrialization had its roots in maritime commerce. Rhode Island merchants provided the capital, managerial ability, and transportation and marketing services which were fundamental to the industrialization of much of the state. Cheap, efficient transportation and the development of steam-powered factories were crucial to the growth of manufacturing. The introduction of railroads and steam engines in the middle decades of the 19th century released mills from their dependence on water-power sites and increased their manufacturing capacity. Large steam-powered mills were established in Blackstone and Pawtuxet River Valley communities as well as in areas that lacked good hydraulic power, such as Bristol, Newport, and, especially, Providence.

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The Civil War triggered a full-scale expansion of established manufacturers nationwide. Base-metal industries in Providence and elsewhere earned profits producing rifles, steam engines, and machinery. At the same time, the war provided incentives for the rapid expansion and mechanization of industries which had developed at a slower pace before 1860. The textile industry was one of these. During the Civil War, cotton was in short supply, and some mills were forced to close though cotton production remained an important part of the state's economy. However, wool was available and woolen goods were in great demand, and the Atlantic Delaine, Riverside, and Wanskuck Mills were three of the more prominent woolen or worsted manufactories established during or immediately after the war.

Industrialization modified the state's landscape and dramatically altered social and economic life. Some interior towns, such as Lincoln, North Smithfield, and Burrillville, were transformed from rural areas dominated by the family farm into amalgamations of manufacturing villages, most of which produced textiles. Before industrialization, the common unit of settlement in these towns had been the family farm, connected to coastal markets by poorly constructed roads. By the end of the nineteenth century, the countryside was dotted with mill villages and larger urban centers, linked by railroads, and most Rhode Island residents no longer worked the land, but lived in urban settings and worked in factories. The poorer quality agricultural lands in the interior were increasingly abandoned while a smaller number of farmers established dairy, poultry and vegetable farms on the better lands to supply the large urban markets. With the urban industrial economy generating wealth and more leisure time for many, the state's shoreline experienced a wave of resort development. The preeminent resort community was Newport, which initially housed its summer visitors in boardinghouses and hotels, but became best known for its elaborate "cottages," private summer houses built by many of the country's wealthiest businessmen. The coastal resorts also catered to the middle ranks of society with large hotels, boardinghouses and more modest cottage residences.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Rhode Island became home to immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, French Canada, Italy, and many other countries. Generally finding work in mills or factories the newcomers brought their religion, language, and culture to the towns or neighborhoods they settled. The history of many ethnic groups may be traced in the surviving churches, social halls, and houses in the communities inhabited by these immigrants.

During the twentieth century, the center of the nation's textile industry moved from the northeast to the south. As early as the 1890s Rhode Island businessmen were aware of southern gains in the textile industry; indeed, Rhode Islanders were among the important investors in southern mills. The firm of Providence millwright Frank P. Sheldon designed dozens of southern mills and local firms produced the machinery to equip them. In 1880 the south produced only 1/16 of the nation's cotton goods; by 1910 it was producing almost a third; and by 1923 nearly half. A variety of causes has been suggested for New England's decline as a textile manufacturing center, including climate, antiquated physical plants, and labor costs, all of which undoubtedly played a part. New England cotton profits declined alarmingly in the years 1910-14 but the stimulus to production created by World War I helped to hide the seriousness of these problems until plants actually began to close. The reorganization of the firm of B.B. & R. Knight (originators of the famous "Fruit of the Loom" label) in 1926 and the abandonment by the American Woolen Company of two Providence mills in 1928 dramatized the frail health of Rhode Island's textile economy.

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The depression of the 1930s exacerbated the poor condition of the state's economy, with cutbacks, closings, and shutdowns of factories widespread and frequent. World War II invigorated the economy, with the still active manufacturers producing a variety of goods for the federal government. The war effort led to the renovation of the old system of coastal fortifications, the expansion of the US Navy's facilities in Newport and the construction of new facilities such as the Quonset Point Naval Air Station and Davisville Advanced Supply Depot. These military installations, concentrated around Narragansett Bay and on the Bay Islands, remain as a legacy of this era.

In the decades after World War II, automobile-centered suburbanization had a pronounced effect on Rhode Island's physical development and demographic evolution. Urban core areas lost population as families left the cities, encouraged in their migration to the suburbs by the construction of new highways and the upgrading of old roads. Commercial and other businesses followed, much of it to the suburbs in the immediate proximity of Providence. In the 1960s, a counter movement back to urban areas began which has led to the revitalization of old and decaying neighborhoods. In the following decades, the adaptation of former commercial and industrial buildings for new service industries, offices, and residential units spread through the urban centers, providing tangible continuity with the state's history. By the beginning of the twenty-first century, suburban growth continued in some rural towns, but at a far slower rate than earlier decades and the cities continued to gain back population, with Providence remaining the dominant center.

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APPENDIX 4

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT HISTORIC RESOURCES AND PRESERVATION
IN RHODE ISLAND

Architectural Assistance

The Easy Guide to the Rehab Standards

http://www.preservation.ri.gov/resources/ezguide_rehab.php

The Guide to Lead Safety in Historic Buildings in Rhode Island

<http://www.preservation.ri.gov/lead/index.php>

Common Sense Preservation website at: www.commonsensepreservation.org

Disaster Preparedness

Protecting the Past at the R Office of Library and information Services website:

<http://www.olis.ri.gov/grants/c2c/index.php>

Regulatory Review

Procedures For Registration And Protection Of Historic Properties, Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission <http://www.preservation.ri.gov/review/regulations.php>

State Survey

Town, City and Statewide Thematic Survey Reports on file at Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission and via download at

www.preservation.ri.gov/survey/publications.php:

Barrington
Block Island
Bristol
Burrillville
Central Falls
Charlestown
Coventry
Cranston
 also: Pawtuxet Village
Cumberland
East Greenwich
East Providence
Exeter
Foster
Glocester
Hopkinton
Jamestown
Johnston
Lincoln
Little Compton
Middletown
Narragansett
 also: Narragansett Pier

Newport--see⁷:
 African-Americans of Newport
 Kay-Catherine-Old Beach Rd.
 Southern Thames Street
 West Broadway
North Kingstown
North Providence
North Smithfield
Pawtucket Portsmouth
Providence (Citywide)
 also: Downtown
 East Side
 Elmwood
 Providence Industrial Sites
 Smith Hill
 South Providence
 West Side
Richmond
Scituate

⁷ The National Register nominations for the Newport Historic District, Bellevue Avenue Historic District and Ocean Drive Historic District contain the historic contexts and inventories for these neighborhoods.

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Smithfield
South Kingstown
Tiverton
Warren
Warwick
also: Pawtuxet Village

West Greenwich
West Warwick
Westerly
Woonsocket

RI Statewide Thematic Reports:

Historic Landscapes of Rhode Island
Native American Archaeology
Outdoor Sculpture of Rhode Island
RI: State-Owned Historic Properties
State Houses of RI

Also: Historic Highway Bridges of RI, RI Department of Transportation, 1990
Rhode Island: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites,
Historic American Engineering Record, 1978

Archaeological Resources

Information in the RIHP&HC survey on archaeological sites and places important in Indian cultural traditions can be found at <http://www.preservation.ri.gov/archaeology/> (See also the Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office below)

Information on underwater sites can be found at

<http://www.preservation.ri.gov/archaeology/underwater.php> (See also the Rhode Island Marine Archeology Program below)

National Register of Historic Places Properties in Rhode Island

On file at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission and at <http://www.preservation.ri.gov/register/riproperties.php>

Government Websites

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley Natl. Heritage Corridor www.nps.gov/blac

Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission <http://www.preservation.ri.gov/>
Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office

<http://www.narragansett-tribe.org/historic-preservation-dept.html>

Preservation Non-profits Websites

Collaboration for Common Sense Preservation <http://www.common sensepreservation.org/>

Grow Smart Rhode Island www.growsmartri.org

Historic New England <http://www.historicnewengland.org/>

National Trust for Historic Preservation, Northeast Region

<http://www.preservationnation.org/about-us/regional-offices/northeast/>

Newport Restoration Foundation <http://www.newportrestoration.org/>

Preserve Rhode Island, www.preserveri.org

Providence Preservation Society www.ppsri.org

Preservation Society of Newport County <http://www.newportmansions.org/>

Providence Revolving Fund <http://www.revolvingfund.org/>

Rhode Island Historical Society www.rihs.org

Rhode Island Marine Archeology Program <http://www.rimap.org/>

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APPENDIX 5

PREPARING A COMMUNITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

RIGL Chapter 45-22.2, *The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act* (1988) requires every municipality in the state to formulate and adopt a local comprehensive plan. The Act establishes criteria for the plan so that it can meet state acceptance and provide towns with a process that can form the basis for local development actions and decisions consistent with local needs and objectives.

The Act specifies that each plan shall address the municipality's resources through nine elements. Element 5, Natural and Cultural Resources, must include policies for the protection of historic and cultural resources of the municipality and the state. The policies and implementation techniques must be identified for inclusion in the implementation program element.

By answering the following eight questions, communities will be able to develop the information that they need to satisfy the requirements of this element.

1. What historic resources exist? Where are they located? In what fashion do they relate to the past and future development of the city?
2. What preservation activities have already taken place? Are in process? How effective have they been?
3. Have the identified resources been adequately documented and evaluated? Are there resources (or groups of resources) which have not been adequately identified, documented, evaluated?
4. How and what way are the community's historic resources threatened?
5. What are the community's goals for its historic resources?
6. How will the community achieve those goals? Through which specific actions? Who are the actors (private/public, local/state)?
7. To what extent is preservation part of the community's overall plan for its development? Does the community plan to integrate preservation into other aspects of its planning? (such as housing, taxation, zoning, open space, site plan review, etc.)
8. Given the identified resources and the present level of preservation activity, which strategies and actions are most important? Least important/ most urgent?

Should a community wish to develop a more in-depth historic preservation plan, they may wish to consult Bradford White and Richard Roddewig, *Preparing a Historic Preservation Plan*.