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# **KeepSpace**

## **Project Selection and Evaluation Frameworks**

**Getting It Done: State Policy Strategies  
from Advocacy to Implementation**

New Partners for Smart Growth Conference

February 4, 2012

**Jeff Davis and Harrison Rue**



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## The Planning Context in Rhode Island

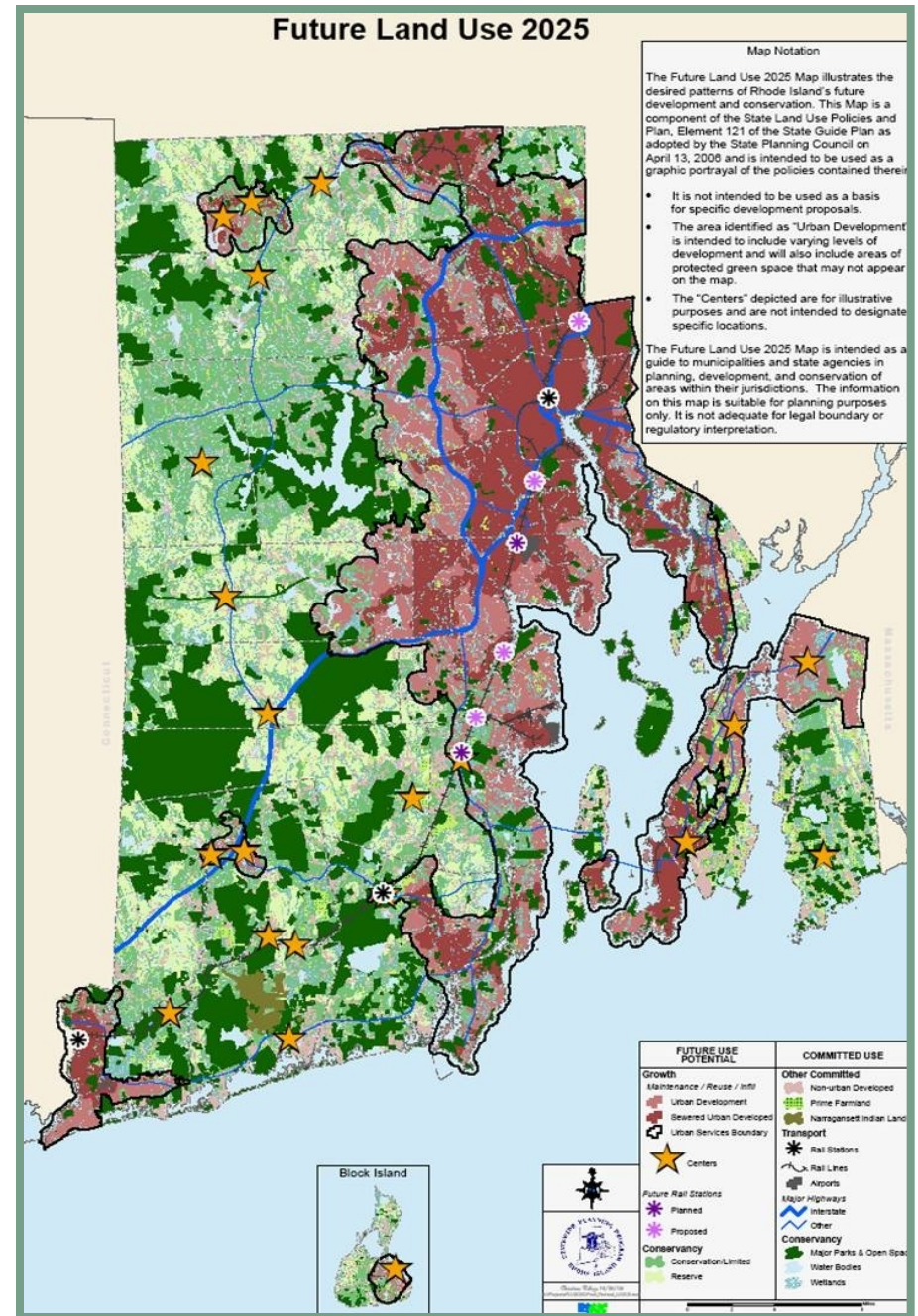
- **State Planning Council**

- The state's single Metropolitan Planning Organization for Transportation Planning
- Only state in the country with this arrangement
- Responsible for updating the State Guide Plan – Land Use, Housing, Energy, Water Supply, etc.
- Review & approve local comprehensive plans
- Staff the Housing Resources Commission, CDBG (non-entitlement), Water Resources Board

# Land Use 2025

## Primary Goals

1. Build the greenspace & greenways system
2. Achieve excellence in community design
3. Develop first class supporting infrastructure
4. Implement the Vision



# Mission



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where neighbors meet, people work, children play.

The KeepSpace mission is to work together in diverse partnerships with a spirit of respect, collaboration and cooperation to create a healthy, prosperous, sustainable future for Rhode Island.



# Elements of a KeepSpace Community

- A good home
- A healthy environment
- Strong commerce
- Sensible infrastructure
- Positive community impact
- Integrated arts, recreation, culture and religion





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## The KeepSpace Philosophy at Work

- **KeepSpace Advisory Committee**

- 14 state agencies and statewide nonprofits
- Meet regularly to share issues of common concern and coordinate efforts
- Informal venue for coordinating intergovernmental issues related to implementing Land Use 2025

- **KeepSpace Communities**

- Community Sponsors selected in 2008
- Pawtucket/Central Falls, Olneyville, Cranston and Westerly
- Local Working Groups created and are now implementing holistic strategies for community improvement

# EPA Smart Growth Implementation Technical Assistance Program



- US EPA provides a consultant team to help localities identify and overcome barriers to “smart growth” and sustainable development.
- One of many resources offered by the HUD-DOT-EPA Sustainable Communities Partnership.
- KeepSpace Advisory Committee saw this funding as a good match for building on and formalizing its work.
- Overall goal of the application was to find a common way to identify “smart” sustainable projects so that partners could target their limited resources where they will have the greatest impact.





# Developing a Project Selection and Evaluation Tool

**US EPA Smart Growth  
Implementation Assistance for the  
KeepSpace Advisory Committee**





## Project goals

- Help KeepSpace Partners **select an appropriate methodology for project selection** based upon smart growth and livability principles and other land use goals articulated by KeepSpace.
- Identify **relevant state funding sources** that could use the project selection methodology.
- Identify **options to facilitate adoption of project selection methodology** by state agencies, including any possible organizational or institutional changes.

## Project activities

- Research project selection frameworks & scorecards
- Research available funding for criteria application
- Agency meetings & focus groups in RI
- Memos on scorecards, funding, & approaches
- Two-day Workshop
- Develop framework/tool/criteria & process options



## Project team

- Staff from EPA, HUD, DOT, Rhode Island Housing, and ICF.
- Draft concepts reviewed/refined in a 2 day workshop by staff from:
  - RIH, RIDOT, RIPTA, Statewide Planning, DEM, DOH, RIEDC, Historic Preservation
  - LISC & GrowSmart RI, several localities and CDCs





## Why develop a project selection tool?

- An agreed-upon set of principles and goals helps align policy toward priority outcomes
- Using a framework of specific, measurable criteria to evaluate projects and competitive funding can:
  - Make investments more cost-effective
  - Help coordinate across agencies (and nonprofits) and leverage limited funding
  - Focus investments on priority locations
  - Make funding decisions more transparent



## Review of available funding sources

- **Statewide funding sources** for housing, transportation, infrastructure, environmental protection, and economic development
- Funding sources for which a **competitive process** is used (i.e., not formula-driven)
- Funding programs for which **state agencies or statewide non-profits have discretion** regarding the project selection or ranking criteria
  
- **When funding is limited, the need for coordinating, leveraging, and targeting funds is increased**

# Review of Principles

- Participants reviewed:
  - PSC livability principles
  - Smart growth principles
  - KeepSpace Community Elements
  - Proposed workshop categories
  
- Consensus reached on workshop categories with one suggested change to title of one category

Partnership for Sustainable Communities Livability Principles	Smart Growth Principles	KeepSpace Community Elements	Workshop Categories
<b>1. Provide more transportation choices.</b> Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.	Provide a variety of transportation choices.	Sensible Infrastructure	Transportation Choice & Accessibility
	Create walkable neighborhoods.		
<b>2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.</b> Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.	Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.	A Good Home	Housing Choice & Affordability
<b>3. Enhance economic competitiveness.</b> Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.	Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.	Strong Commerce	Economic Development
<b>4. Support existing communities.</b> Target federal funding toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.	Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.	Sensible Infrastructure	Support of Existing Communities <b>and Designated Growth Centers</b>
	Take advantage of compact building design.	A Good Home; Sensible Infrastructure	
	Mix land uses.	Strong Commerce; Integrated Arts, Recreation, Culture, & Religion	
<b>5. Value communities and neighborhoods.</b> Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.	Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.	Integrated Arts, Recreation, Culture, & Religion	Community Character & Collaboration
	Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.	Positive Community Impact	
<b>6. Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.</b> Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.			
<i>Environmental issues are embedded in Livability Principles 1, 2, 4, &amp; 6.</i>	Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.	A Healthy Environment	Environmental Protection & Public Health





## Assessment categories

Participants generally agreed with these categories for the final project assessment tool:

1. Transportation Choice and Accessibility
2. Housing Choice and Affordability
3. Economic Development
4. Support of Existing Communities and Designated Growth Centers
5. Community Character and Collaboration
6. Environmental Protection and Public Health



## Types of assessment approaches

- Two types of approaches :
  - Checklist/Scorecard
    - Yes/no or sliding scale
  - Directed Response
    - Written narrative
- Participants preferred using a mix of approaches depending on the assessment criterion in question
- External tools or calculators introduced as third option for some criteria

### Example Evaluation Tools

- Enterprise Green Communities Criteria
- Smart Growth Leadership Institute (SGLI) Smart Growth Project Scorecard
- LEED-Neighborhood Design (LEED-ND)
- Smart and Sustainable Growth Recognition Program, DC Smart Growth Alliance
- Cedar Rapids (IA) Smart Growth Scorecard
- Austin (TX) Smart Growth Matrix
- Charlotte (NC) Sustainability Index
- Massachusetts Commonwealth Capital
- GreenTRIP (San Francisco, CA)



## Concerns of Funding Applicants

- Different criteria or weighting may be needed for different contexts:
  - Urban, suburban, rural **OR**
  - Within urban services boundary, in designated growth center, other
- Applicants want to see how their proposal was scored (“transparency”); preferred timely response



## Concerns of Funding Applicants

- A complex tool will be difficult for small communities to complete
- Tool complexity should be commensurate with amount of funding at stake
- Assessments based on community policies or plans (rather than projects) could unfairly penalize otherwise worthy projects
- Meeting sustainability criteria could increase project costs



## Issues Raised by Funders

- One tool with different thresholds for different settings, or separate tool for each?
- Weighting of criteria should be done with public participation
- How would agencies combine tool with existing evaluation criteria?
- Who exactly does the scoring and when?
- Would tool bestow special “status” on high-scoring projects?
- Tool should educate applicants and reviewers, provide rationale for assessment criteria

# KeepSpace Project Selection Tool

- Six categories
- 5 to 6 questions in most categories
- ‘Open Response’ question in each
- Introductory text for each section, with short explanation for each criteria
- Weighting available but not required



# 1. Transportation Choice & Accessibility

	Possible Answers	Points	Response	Score	Weight	Total
<p><b>Proximity to Scheduled Transit Service:</b> Locating a residential project within walking distance of scheduled transit service makes it more likely that future residents will use transit for a portion of their trips. Similarly, locating a non-residential project near scheduled transit service makes it more likely that employees, customers, and other visitors will use transit to get there.</p>						
<p>1.1. How close will the project be to a stop or station for scheduled public transit (bus or rail)? Walking distance from the project's proposed location to the nearest transit stop can be calculated using RIPTA's Google Maps Trip Planner (<a href="http://www.ripta.com/trips/trips.php">http://www.ripta.com/trips/trips.php</a>).</p>	< ¼ mile	9	<p>&lt; ¼ mile</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>9</p>
	¼ to ½ mile	6				
	½ to 1 mile	3				
	> 1 mile	0				
<p><b>Complete Streets:</b> Complete streets are those that adequately provide for all roadway users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists, to the extent appropriate to the function and context of the street. For example, to facilitate walking and bicycling where appropriate, a project should include sidewalks and well-marked crosswalks, bicycle lanes, and street trees. For more info on complete streets, see <a href="http://www.completestreets.org/webdocs/cs-brochure-features.pdf">www.completestreets.org/webdocs/cs-brochure-features.pdf</a>.</p>						
<p>1.2. Will the project include complete streets, or will it be located on an existing complete street?</p>	Yes	3	<p>Yes</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>3</p>
	No	0				
<p><b>Connectivity and Choice:</b> An interconnected street network - like those found in traditional downtowns and neighborhoods - supports walking, biking, and transit access, and can make all trips shorter. A connected grid of streets can also allow more streets to have fewer lanes - making them easier to cross and more pleasant to walk or live on - compared to forcing all traffic onto wider, fast-moving highways.</p>						
<p>1.3. Will the project have an interconnected road, sidewalk, and trail system or will it be located on an existing network that is interconnected?</p>	Yes	3	<p>Yes</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>3</p>
	No	0				
<p><b>Placement of Parking:</b> Parking lots can serve as obstacles between pedestrians and their destinations; excess parking can also increase stormwater runoff. Therefore, the next question asks about the placement of parking for the proposed project. The amount of parking needed for a particular project can be reduced through means such as sharing parking for land uses that have different patterns of parking demand.</p>						

## 2. Housing Choice & Affordability

	Possible Answers	Points	Response	Score	Weight	Total
<p><b>Mix of Housing Types:</b> Providing a range of housing choices allows people of all ages and stages of life to find a niche in a community.</p>						
<p>2.1. For a residential project, will it offer a mix of housing types, or will it increase the diversity of housing types within the specified range of the project as listed below?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Within the urban services boundary: ¼ mile</li> <li>– Within a designated growth center that is outside the urban services boundary: ½ mile</li> <li>– Outside the urban services boundary and outside of a designated growth center: 2 miles</li> </ul>	Yes	5	Yes	5	1	5
	No	0				
<p><b>Range of Housing Prices:</b> Rhode Island's KeepSpace initiative works to ensure that communities provide homes that are affordable to rent or own, especially to those who work close by. Providing a range of housing prices provides people of all income levels the opportunity to live in or near the communities in which they work, which lowers household transportation costs. Diversity of housing prices is defined here as including both affordable and market-rate homes.</p>						
<p>2.2. Will the project provide a range of housing prices accessible to different income levels, or will it increase the diversity of housing prices within the specified distance of the project location as listed below?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Within the urban services boundary: ¼ mile</li> <li>– Within a designated growth center that is outside the urban services boundary: ½ mile</li> <li>– Outside the urban services boundary and outside of a designated growth center: 2 miles</li> </ul>	Yes	5	Yes	5	1	5
	No	0				
<p><b>Compact Residential Development:</b> Compact site design is necessary to support wider transportation choices, because minimum levels of density are required to make public transit networks viable. Compact development also provides cost savings for localities, because it is cheaper on a per-unit basis to provide and maintain services like water, sewer, electricity, and other utilities in more compact neighborhoods. Compact development also allows provides and protects more open, undeveloped land that would exist otherwise to absorb and filter rain</p>						



# 3. Economic Development

3.1. Can the project be reasonably expected to create new permanent jobs in within the urban services boundary or a designated growth center? (To be counted, jobs must pay wages at least 140% of the federal minimum wage (\$10.15 per hour or about \$25K per year.)	> 50	6	> 50	6	1	6
	21 to 50	4				
	1 to 20	2				
	No	0				
<p><b>Workforce Training:</b> Projects that include a workforce training component will enhance the economic competitiveness of the community and Rhode Island by improving the skills of those working on the project or future employees at the project location.</p>						
3.2. Will the project include an education or training component for likely employees, residents, or construction workers?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				
<p><b>Areas Targeted for Reinvestment:</b> This question awards credit to projects that would be located within a state enterprise zone or other area targeted for reinvestment by the state or federal government. For example, Rhode Island has designated state enterprise zones to encourage increased employment at facilities located in those zones. (see <a href="http://www.riedc.com/business-services/enterprise-zones">http://www.riedc.com/business-services/enterprise-zones</a>).</p>						
3.3. Will the project be located in an area designated or targeted for reinvestment (e.g., state enterprise zone)?	Yes	3	Yes	3	1	3
	No	0				
<p><b>Support of Displaced Residents and Businesses:</b> State funds should spur economic development, but not at the cost of residents and existing businesses. Measures should be taken to retain or relocate businesses or residents that will be displaced by a project.</p>						
3.4. Will the project provide for the retention or relocation of any displaced businesses or residents?	Yes	1	Yes	1	1	1
	No	0				
<p><b>Open Response:</b> These two questions provide an opportunity for the applicant to note any other economic development and job creation aspects of the project that were not addressed by the other questions in this category.</p>						
3.5. In the space provided on the next worksheet labeled "Written Responses," please provide any additional information on how the project would promote economic development and job creation in appropriate areas.	Reviewer will assign up to 4 points based on response on next worksheet.			4	1	4
3.6. In the space provided on the next worksheet labeled "Written Responses," please provide any additional information	Reviewer will assign up to 4 points based					

# 4. Support of Existing Communities & Designated Growth Centers



4. Support of Existing Communities & Designated Growth Centers						
<p>Focusing investment on existing communities – through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling— can increase community revitalization, reduce public infrastructure costs, and help safeguard rural landscapes and natural resources. Compact development within or adjacent to existing neighborhoods and served by existing infrastructure minimizes land consumption, reduces development costs and long-term infrastructure operating and maintenance costs, conserves energy, and increases walkability and the viability of transit service. Mixing the uses (housing, retail, office, commercial/retail, services, institutional) and putting services closer together (i.e., designing commercial developments with a higher "floor area ratio" or FAR) also supports walking, bicycling, transit service, and shorter driving trips. Supporting more active transportation choices - through walking, bicycling, and access to parks and recreation - can improve health by encouraging regular exercise as part of daily living.</p>						
	Possible Answers	Points	Response	Score	Weight	Total
<p><b>Consistency with Land Use 2025:</b> The purpose of <i>Land Use 2025: Rhode Island State Land Use Policies and Plan</i> is to guide future land use and development and to present State Guide Plan policies under which State and local land development activities will be reviewed for consistency. Land Use 2025 proposes growth within an urban services boundary and in selected centers in rural and suburban communities to provide growth opportunities throughout the state.</p>						
4.1. Will the project be located within the urban services boundary or in a designated growth center (i.e., consistent with <i>Land Use 2025</i> )?	Yes	6	Yes	6	1	6
	No	0				
<p><b>Proximity to Water &amp; Sewer Infrastructure:</b> Locating a project in close proximity to existing utility infrastructure encourages more resource-efficient development of land, reduces development costs, and conserves energy.</p>						
4.2. If the project will be located outside the urban services boundary, will it require an extension of the water or sewer service in the area?	Yes	0	Yes	0	1	0
	No	3				
<p><b>Adjacency to Existing Development:</b> Locating a project adjacent to existing development encourages more resource-efficient development of land, reduces development costs, and conserves energy. It also can reduce travel distances and costs for those coming to and from the project site.</p>						
4.3. Will at least 50% of the project's perimeter border on existing development?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				
<p><b>Mix of Uses:</b> Mixing land uses at a project site (or adding new land uses to a neighborhood) can shorten travel distances and make it more likely that people will use alternative modes of transportation such as walking, bicycling, or transit.</p>						
4.4. Will the project contain a mix of different uses (e.g., housing, retail, office, commercial/retail, services, institutional) within the project site, or will it provide one or more new land uses within ½ mile of the project?	3+ uses	2	3+ uses	2	1	2
	2 uses	1				
	1 use	0				

# 5. Community Character & Collaboration

<p><b>Use of Historic and Other Existing Buildings:</b> Preservation or adaptive reuse of historic and other existing buildings can be more resource efficient than new construction, in part because such buildings are already tied into public infrastructure. Historic buildings also make a unique contribution to community character.</p>						
5.1. Will the project reuse or rehabilitate historic or other existing buildings in a manner that preserves their scale, materials, and character?	Yes	4	Yes	4	1	4
	No	0				
<p><b>Community Gathering Spaces:</b> Community spaces contribute to the vitality of a community by providing opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, and entertainment. Such gathering spaces include plazas, squares, parks, and greenways, as well as museums, theaters, and community centers.</p>						
5.2. Will the project create or enhance community gathering spaces that are open to the public?	Yes	4	Yes	4	1	4
	No	0				
<p><b>Consistency with Community Context:</b> Community character is expressed in part through shared architectural, siting, and landscape design elements in the buildings that make up a community or neighborhood. This character is often incorporated into adopted community plans or vision documents.</p>						
5.3. Does the project design (if a building) or design guidelines (if a development) incorporate building siting, architecture, and landscaping that fit with the community context?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				
<p><b>Consistency with Existing Plans:</b> Rhode Island state law requires each city or town to prepare a local comprehensive plan that indicates how the city or town intends to guide its future development. These plans are reviewed and approved by the state's Department of Administration. A proposed project should be consistent with the local comprehensive plan, as well as any other smaller-scale plans that pertain to the project location.</p>						
5.4. Is the project consistent with the approved local comprehensive plan and any other place-specific plans (e.g., corridor, neighborhood)?	Yes	4	Yes	4	1	4
	No	0				
<p><b>Community Involvement:</b> Communities have different needs and will therefore emphasize some livability principles over others when deciding on how they wish to develop. To discern how a project can align with the vision and preferences of a community, project sponsors should solicit the involvement of the people who live and work there. Involving the community early and often in the project development process can improve public support for projects that promote livability.</p>						
5.5. Did the developer/sponsor use any of the following community involvement methods during the project's design?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Meet with the local project review staff to discuss a concept plan prior to formal submittal.</li> <li>– Engage key stakeholders and the surrounding community in a planning charrette prior to project design.</li> <li>– Attend local neighborhood meetings to present project plans and get feedback.</li> </ul>	> 2 methods	2	Yes	2	1	2
	1-2 methods	1				
	No	0				



# 6. Environmental Protection & Public Health

<p><b>Brownfields:</b> Brownfields are formerly used sites (typically industrial) that may have (or may be perceived to have) contamination issues. By cleaning up and reusing a brownfield, a project avoids the use of previously undeveloped land. Also, brownfield sites typically already have access to existing infrastructure such as roads and utilities.</p>						
6.1. Will the project result in the clean-up and reuse of a brownfield?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				
<p><b>Preservation of Agricultural &amp; Recreational Land:</b> Farms contribute to a state's economic development and provide local food and farm vistas, as well as tourism opportunities and wildlife habitat. Recreational lands provide opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors.</p>						
6.2. Will the project preserve land zoned for agricultural or recreational use by building in other locations?	Yes	1	Yes	1	1	1
	No	0				
<p><b>Preservation of Environmentally Sensitive Land:</b> Proper site selection avoids damage to or loss of fragile and scarce environmental resources.</p>						
6.3. Will the project avoid impacts to land physically unsuitable for development, such as slopes greater than 25%, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				
<p><b>Open Space:</b> Open space preservation promotes livability by preserving critical environmental areas, improving community quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities.</p>						
6.4. Will the project: (1) set aside at least 10% of total acreage as public open space, or (2) if within the urban services boundary, be located within ¼ mile of a dedicated public open space of at least ¾ acre?	Yes	1	Yes	1	1	1
	No	0				
<p><b>Green Building:</b> Green building techniques provide both environmental and health benefits. Environmental benefits derive from the use of building designs, materials, and appliances that reduce the use of energy and water, as well as from the use of materials with other environmental benefits (e.g., made with recycled content). Health benefits result from the use of building designs and materials that reduce exposure to potentially harmful substances, such as mold, lead, radon, or volatile organic compounds (VOCs).</p>						
6.5. Will the project meet any established sustainable design criteria (e.g., LEED, Enterprise Green Communities Criteria)?	Yes	1	Yes	1	1	1
	No	0				
<p><b>Energy Efficiency:</b> Energy-efficient homes achieve energy savings through heating, cooling, hot water, lighting, and appliance efficiencies, which improve resident comfort, reduce operating costs, and decrease emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.</p>						
6.6. Will new or rehabilitated structures exceed the energy efficiency standards incorporated into the applicable state building code? (SBC-8 State Energy Conservation Code (non-residential) or Rhode Island One and Two Family Dwelling Code (residential)).	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				

## 6. Environmental Protection & Public Health

**Stormwater Management:** Reducing or eliminating stormwater runoff through design and management techniques increases on-site filtration, reduces the amount of pollutants from entering waterways, and decreases soil erosion. In December 2010, Rhode Island revised its stormwater requirements to incorporate low-impact development techniques as the primary method of stormwater control for developments. Use of these techniques helps to reduce net runoff and ensure adequate groundwater recharge. Points are awarded to projects that exceed the state's updated requirements or meet them even if not required to do so.

6.8. Will the project use stormwater management methods that exceed state requirements (or meet requirements if not required to)?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				

**Access to Fresh Produce:** Good nutrition is vital to good health, disease prevention, and the growth and development of children and adolescents. Low-income and underserved communities often have limited access to stores that sell healthy food, especially high-quality fruits and vegetables. In addition, rural communities often have a higher number of convenience stores where healthy foods are less available than in larger, retail food markets.

6.9. If the project will be residential or will include a residential component, will it improve the availability of fresh produce through at least one of the following means?	Yes	2	Yes	2	1	2
	No	0				

- Be located within ½ mile of a supermarket or a weekly farmer's market
- Provide a drop-off site for community-supported agriculture
- Provide an appropriate space for a community garden or be located within ¼ mile of an off-site community garden

**Access to Areas for Physical Activity:** Concerns about rising levels of obesity and cardiovascular disease have led to a considerable amount of attention to how the built environment can be designed to create more opportunities for physical activity. This question addresses residential proximity to playing areas, parks, open space, and trail systems.

6.10. If a project has a residential component, will the homes be located within ½ mile of parks, playing areas, trails, or other open space areas that are publicly accessible and can facilitate active recreation (e.g. walking, cycling, organized games)?	Yes	1	Yes	1	1	1
	No	0				

**Open Response:** This question provides an opportunity for the applicant to note any other environmental or public health aspects of the project that were not addressed by the other questions in this category.

6.11. In the space provided on the next worksheet labeled "Written Responses," please provide any additional information on how the project would contribute to the protection of the natural environment or the improvement of public health, such as by encouraging active living, improving access to healthy food, or increasing the supply of healthy housing (i.e., housing free of health hazards such as lead, radon, or mold).	Reviewer will assign up to 4 points based on response on next worksheet.		4	1	4
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## Implementation options

Four options identified for testing tool, interagency coordination, process, and organizational structure:

- **Continued informal coordination**, as KeepSpace currently functions.
- **Dedicated staff and lead agency** (e.g., through an Executive Order) with a more formal coordinating role at Rhode Island Housing, Statewide Planning, or elsewhere.
- **Cabinet or sub-cabinet level coordination** (also through an Executive Order), possibly supported by the agency staffing noted in option 2.
- **Expand the State Planning Council** (the statewide MPO) and broaden its mission and role to better coordinate transportation and land use with housing, environmental, economic development and other investments.



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## Next Steps: Test Framework

Resources on which to “shadow” test the tool this year

- Statewide Planning: Challenge Grants
- Rhode Island Housing: Housing Credits
- RI LISC: Neighborhood Development Fund
- RIDOT: Transportation Enhancement
- DEM: Open space recreation acquisition and development grants
- RIEDC: Brownfields, Renewable Energy, Small Business Revolving Loan Fund.





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# Early lessons from the testing

## Statewide Planning: Challenge Grants

- State's rhetoric on sustainable development seems to be influencing applications.
- Tool helped identify ways to update the grant's RFP to guide applicants to submit proposals even more in line with the criteria.
- Tool helped strengthen proposals that did not score as well in the regular review process – particularly projects focused on climate change, bicycle/pedestrian connections, etc.
- Tool did not appear to have a bias one way or the other toward urban or rural projects.
- Technical Assistance process brought about pairing Challenge Grants with other Rhode Island Housing funding.



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# Early lessons from the testing

## Rhode Island Housing: Tax Credits

- Tool resulted in similar results to the current review process.
- But reinforced that financial feasibility is still our bottom line.
- Winning applicant got an almost perfect score with the tool, and scored highly on financial feasibility.
- A KeepSpace Community also scored well, but the financials were not as strong.
- The tool helps ensure that bad projects aren't funded, but it needs more refinement to really differentiate among several good projects.



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# Other Opportunities

- DOH: Training for volunteer home inspectors
- Adjusting the criteria to apply to State investments in infrastructure/Capital Budget
- Adjusting the criteria to prioritize land and water conservation investments
- City of Providence considering how the tool can be used at the municipal level
- **HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant!**



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# Sustainable Communities

## Major Proposed Outcomes

- New Housing and Economic Development plans coordinated with the “scenario-based” planning in Land Use 2025 and Transportation 2030.
- Establish Growth Centers for each of the State’s 39 municipalities.
- Weave Social Equity into all State plans.
- Expand and improve a data hub accessible to all communities in Rhode Island.



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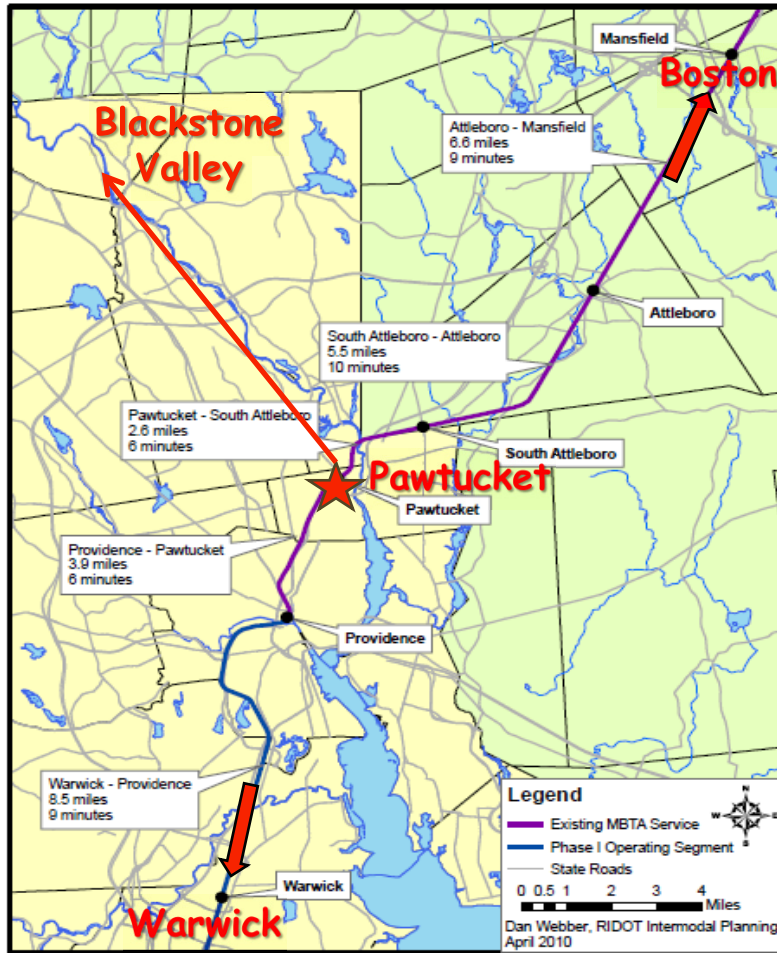
# Sustainable Communities

## Building on the EPA Technical Assistance

- Grant consortium will include all of the KeepSpace Advisory Committee members and Communities.
- Consortium will force the issue of formalizing intergovernmental coordination.
- Tool can be used to help communities identify their Growth Centers.
- Hope to establish a new round of KeepSpace grants that pool resources from various agencies – can target funds to Growth Centers.

# Opportunities for future coordination

Proposed Pawtucket Station - Corridor



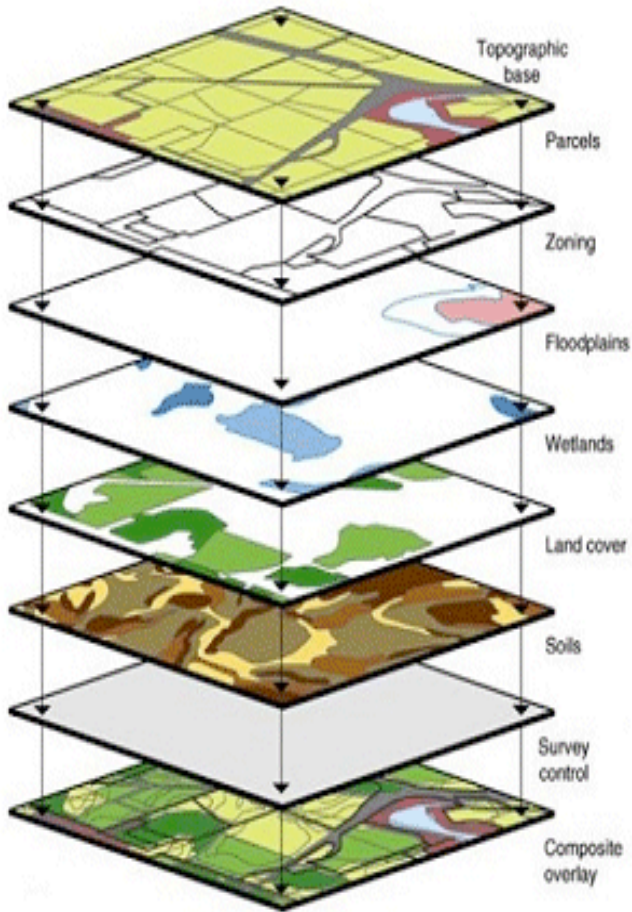
Proposed Commuter Rail



Investing in  
Infrastructure

# Opportunities for future coordination

## Funding local GIS development



The screenshot shows the 'Tiverton, RI Online GIS Viewer' interface in a Mozilla Firefox browser. The page title is 'Tiverton, RI Online GIS Viewer - Mozilla Firefox'. The address bar shows the URL: <http://host.appgeo.com/TivertonRI/Map.aspx>. The page features a navigation menu with options: Property Viewer, Interactive Mapping, Abutters, Property Record Card, Printable Map, and New Property Search. The main content area displays a map of a property with a red outline, overlaid on a street grid. The property is located at 343 Highland Rd. To the right of the map, there is a 'Property Viewer' panel with the following information:

Property ID 89-9	
Address	343 HIGHLAND RD
Owner	TOWN OF TIVERTON
<b>Information</b>	
Lot Size (acres)	6.75
Land Value	\$1,017,500.00
Building Value	\$556,300.00
Total Value	\$1,573,800.00
Zoning	R30
Land Use Description	Municipal
Sale Book	
Sale Page	
Last Sale Date	
Last Sale Price	\$0.00

## Providing the necessary tools



# Opportunities for future coordination

Transfer of  
Development Rights



Piloting needed  
regulatory tools

# Key Lessons Learned



keepspace

- **Always keep building relationships**
- **But don't rely solely on relationships! A solid governance structure breeds stability**
- **Always consider who else could benefit from any grant you apply for and partner with them**
- **Every failure or frustration is still an opportunity to further the dialogue**
- **Open dialogue opens minds and changes institutional culture**
- **Lasting change will come when smart growth becomes the cultural new normal**

# Thank you!

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