



## Department of Planning and Development

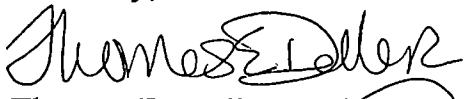
DAVID N. CICILLINE  
Mayor

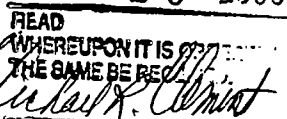
The Honorable City Council  
Office of the City Council  
25 Dorrance Street  
City Hall  
Providence, RI 02903

Honorable City Council:

Please find transmitted to you the Annual Report of the Department of Planning and Development for 2002. This report was produced under the leadership of Samuel Shamoon, AICP during his term as director of the department.

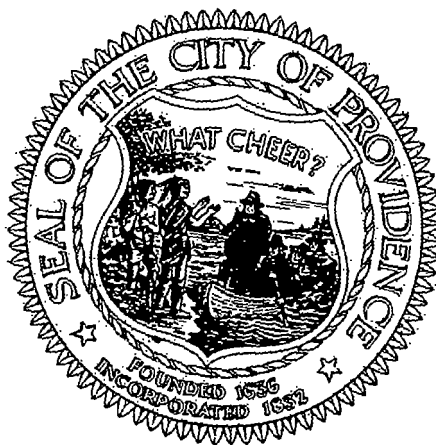
Sincerely,

  
Thomas E. Deller, AICP  
Director

IN CITY COUNCIL  
NOV 20 2003  
READ  
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED  
THE SAME BE RECORDED  


**Department of Planning  
And Development**

**Annual Report  
FY2002**



**Samuel J. Shamoon, AICP  
Director**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Planning and Development is charged with preparing, maintaining and implementing plans for the physical, economic and social development of the city. One of the primary goals of the Department is to apply the expertise and experience of its professional staff to revitalize the City's neighborhoods and rejuvenate commercial districts. The Department also helps to develop and shape larger development initiatives that impact the city on a larger scale.

In addition, the Department provides essential staff assistance to numerous boards and commissions, such as the City Plan Commission, the Downcity District Design Review Commission, the Historic District Commission, Providence Economic Development Corporation and Providence Neighborhood Housing Corporation. Staff members also serve as key liaisons to statewide committees such as the State Planning Council, Transportation Advisory Committee, and the Rhode Island Geographic Information Systems Executive Committee.

The Department is divided into five divisions: Planning, Economic Development, Community Development and Housing, Special Projects and Project Management. The divisions work collectively to research, write and coordinate special project plans, neighborhood plans, housing and economic development plans, and the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Project Management Division focuses on implementing the plans and Community Development and Housing helps to determine funding assistance, and to put plans in the context of federal programs such as the Community Development Block Grant Program. The Department also manages, and facilitates traffic calming, streetscape improvement, and infrastructure improvement projects throughout the City. The Department participates in a number of public and private partnerships, such as the Downcity Partnership, and the South Providence Development Corporation.

The Director of the Department serves as the Executive Director of the Providence Redevelopment Agency, which creates redevelopment plans and undertakes the necessary land acquisition to implement them. The PRA, along with other divisions in the Department, assesses and implements the revitalization of blighted and underutilized brownfields throughout the city.

**ADMINISTRATION AND FISCAL**

The Fiscal Division administers all fiscal and personnel aspects of the department and is responsible for insuring that the financial obligations of the department are administered in a professional manner. The division staff has nearly a century of accounting experience. The Division maintains all personnel records and files and is the point of contact for the payroll function that processes a minimum of 100 records weekly. At present, over \$10,000,000 in HUD consolidated program funds are administered along with EDA grants, Lead Program and Healthy Homes Program, EDI-SP grants, HUD Brownfield and Section 108 Repayments. Direct contact is made daily with the HUD Integrated Disbursement and Information System that controls cash transactions for the CDBG, HOME, HOPWA and ESG Program. All City general fund transaction and records are maintained and processes by this division, as well as the purchasing function and coordination with the City of Providence Board and Contract and Supply. This division also manages the department's Management Information Services. Technology plays an increasingly important role in the department's work in all divisions.

During the year ended June 30, 2002, the Department of Planning and Development assumed complete oversight of the accounting records for the Providence Neighborhood Housing Corporation. Funds for the PNHC are housing loan repayments and city bond funds.

The Department of Planning and Development services over 1200 loans of the Providence Economic Development Corporation and Providence Neighborhood Housing Corporation as well as the growing number of Home Repair and Home Purchase loans generated by the City Bond issue. Of these loans approximately half require the issuance of monthly invoices, followed by the recording and depositing of payments. In order to accomplish this task, a computerized loan servicing package was acquired. The Nortridge Loan System is windows based and provides monthly invoices, late notices and a variety of reports.

The Department continues to process new loans for both Economic Development Corporation clients and Housing Corporation clients. During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002, approximately 1100 checks were processed for both corporations.

## PLANNING DIVISION

The work of the Planning Division falls into two major categories: Planning and regulatory Review. Planning is the function delegated to the Department by the City Charter. As a function, planning is multifaceted and affects every resident of Providence. From the broadest concepts in comprehensive planning, to the details of neighborhood projects, planning must respond to the needs and aspirations of the residents, property owners and businesses in the City. Planning must go hand-in-hand with implementation, without which, the best of plans would only be paper documents that have no impact on the city. The Planning Division works closely with Community Development and Housing and Project Management and Special Projects to make planning a reality. A significant part of implementation is through the regulatory framework, particularly zoning and development review regulations. While the Division does not enforce the zoning ordinance, the planning staff is called upon to service several implementation and regulatory agencies such as the Providence Redevelopment Agency, the City Plan Commission, the Providence Historic District Commission and the Downcity Review Committee.

An important part of the planning division is the graphics, mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) component. All zoning maps and overlay district maps are updated and maintained in the planning division. GIS plays an increasingly important role in the work of the division and the department. Currently the division is working to increase its capacity to expand the department's GIS capabilities. Some of the data layers that the division works with are parcels, zoning, ward boundaries, streets, and U.S. Census data. In the future, an updated GIS system may make it possible for the public to access information about a particular property at a customer service terminal in the department.

### I. Planning

In the range of services the Department provides, the role of planning is to conduct research on growth patterns and trends, to plan for the city's revitalization, to develop regulations and programs, to direct the revitalization, and to review development proposals to ensure that the development conforms to the city's plans and regulations.

#### A. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

A major function of the Department is the preparation of the city's Comprehensive Plan, prepared by the Department and adopted by the City Plan Commission and the City Council with extensive public input. The Comprehensive Plan articulates a vision for Providence's future; establishes goals and specific policies intended to help achieve the vision through various functional elements. These include land use, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, historic preservation, transportation, community services/facilities, and open space. Long range plans establish a framework for future economic development, housing development, and capital improvements that will be completed over a period of time, either in a neighborhood or on a citywide basis.

- *Providence 2000: The Comprehensive Plan* - This is the main document with the elements noted above.

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- **Series Plan No. 1** - *Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan 1991-1995*
- **Series Plan No. 2** - *Plan for Preservation*
- **Series Plan No. 3** - *Adult Entertainment*
- **Series Plan No. 4** - *Plan for Hazard Mitigation*
- **Area Plan No. 1A** - *Downtown Providence: Master Plan*
- **Area Plan No. 1B** - *Downtown Providence: Implementation Plan*
- **Area Plan No. 2** - *I-195 - Old Harbor Plan*
- **Area Plan No. 3** - *Harbor Management Plan*

By tracking and analyzing changes in demographics and land use, the Department develops an ever-changing profile of the City. The Comprehensive Plan must be updated every five years as required by state law.

After receiving comments from Rhode Island's Statewide Planning Program in November 2000, Planning Division staff revised the City's Comprehensive Plan to address these comments. The Plan was approved by Statewide Planning in May of 2002.

The effectiveness of Planning is in its implementation. Each plan produced under the Comprehensive Plan is under some form of implementation, as follows:

## B. NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

The Planning Division works with neighborhood groups to develop phased programs to strengthen the neighborhoods by improving housing conditions, employment opportunities, recreation, open space, lighting and sidewalks. While the entire Department contributes to these efforts, the Planning Division generally makes the first contact with neighborhood groups to identify problems and to develop a neighborhood plan. The Project Management Real Estate Division will see that infrastructure improvements like sidewalks and trees are installed or that abandoned property is purchased and rehabilitated or demolished as recommended in the plan. The Division works with the Community Development and Housing Division to make sure that the necessary funds are available and that all requirements are met, and works with neighborhood residents to assist in meeting neighborhood housing needs. The consolidated planning 5-year strategy, developed by the Community Development and Housing Division, for all HUD consolidated programs is the guide for the allocation of CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, ESG and lead resources.

Typical Neighborhood Plans have included:

- 1) Ward 9 / Elmwood Redevelopment Plan
- 2) Upper South Providence Plan
- 3) Douglas Avenue Revitalization Plan
- 4) Charles Street Business District Revitalization Plan

- 5) Silver Lake/Hartford Revitalization Plan
- 6) West Broadway / Westminster Street Plan
- 7) Fox Point Traffic Calming / Neighborhood Plan
- 8) Cranston Street / West End Redevelopment Plan
- 9) Jewelry District Plan

### C. SPECIAL AREA PLANNING

#### **I-195 Relocation Project and Old Harbor Plan**

The purpose of this plan is to establish guidelines for the development of private and public lands south of downtown Providence that will be made available by the relocation of Interstate 195. The current highway will be moved to a new location south of the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier. Once the highway is relocated, approximately forty-five acres of land on both sides of the Providence River will become available for new development. This area is known as "Old Harbor".

The Department has been working with RIDOT and its consultants to create zoning, design guidelines, and policies for the redevelopment of the land. It is anticipated that the finalized plan and parcel map will go before the City Plan Commission by the end of 2002.

#### **India Point Master Plan**

Concurrent with the Old Harbor Plan and I-195 Relocation, the Department has started the Master Plan process for India Point. Working with local neighborhood groups and residents, the Department has engaged a consultant to help shape a vision for the area that considers open space, connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, development, recreation, transportation, and access to the water. 1. Old Harbor Plan / I-195 Relocation

#### **Downcity / Downtown Revitalization**

It has been a major initiative of this Department to insure that the policies set by the Mayor to keep Downtown strong and vibrant are met. Planning projects underway include:

Implementation of the downtown traffic circulation, parking and signage plan has received \$3.2 million through the RI Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. In order to address recent construction and proposed new development of major traffic generators, the Department looked into traffic flow, parking supply and a uniform signage system. This signage system will make it easier for visitors to get into Downtown Providence from the surrounding highways, will clarify circulation patterns within the Downtown, and will identify the location of major attractions and parking.

The Downcity Review Committee continues to monitor and review projects in the Downcity (see Regulatory Functions below).



**Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project**

This \$14 million project will begin with RIDOT construction of the first phase of the Northwest Bike Path following the course of the Woonasquatucket River from Waterplace Park in downtown Providence west to the Johnston/Providence line. The Bike Path will incorporate green space on both sides of the Woonasquatucket River, including two brownfield sites that will be remediated and transformed into neighborhood parks.

- Construction of on-street portion of RIDOT Bike Path (Promenade, Kinsley) – Completed in 2002
- Begin remediation of the Riverside Mills site– June-October 2002
- Bike path construction– 2003
- Park construction at Riverside– 2003
- Remediation of Sluiceway at Lincoln Lace & Braid site– Fall 2002

**Riverside Mills Park**

The site is currently being transformed by the Department of Planning and Development and the Parks Department from a neighborhood liability into the premier neighborhood City park, at a cost of \$2.1 million of Federal, State, and City funds. The Park will include:

- Scenic overlook structure at dam location
- 1,300 feet of walking paths
- Park walkways at playground and water park areas
- Grass amphitheater/open space for free play
- Outdoor performing arts stage (24' x 35') with electrical service
- Outdoor lighting
- All park utilities- water, sewer line, electrical services
- New trees
- Playground area, including a tot lot
- Waterpark area
- Picnic pavilion
- RIDOT bike path
- Skateboard area

One building currently exists on the Riverside Mills property, a two-story brick building. The City has stabilized the building and will be rehabilitated by summer of 2003. It will become community space for the Park and will include two residences.

**Lincoln Lace and Braid**

This site (adjacent to Merino Park) is another brownfield that the City will remediate and transform into a park. After remediation, the City will build youth soccer fields (and accessory parking). Remediation of the sluiceway will begin in fall of 2002.

**New Cities Planning**

Three large areas are undergoing major studies at this time. The studies, performed by world renowned consulting firms, include land use, economic issues and opportunities, environmental conditions and the feasibility of new development. These are:

**Narragansett Landing**

Sasaki Associates is the consultant for this area, which encompasses over 500 acres extending from the Point Street Bridge to the Cranston city line between I-95 and the Providence River. The old waterfront with a multitude of petroleum storage, maritime industrial and many marginal and underutilized sites will be examined and evaluated.

The City received a \$250,000 Pilot Grant from the EPA for environmental site assessment at Narragansett Landing. The Planning Division will manage the grant and the consultants chosen to perform the work.

**Promenade**

Urban Strategies, Inc. is the consultant for this area which includes the land west of the Providence Place mall to Olneyville. Old mill buildings that have stood empty for years as well as vacant sites will be studied and evaluated for potential new development.

**Westminster Crossing**

The Cecil Group, is the consultant for this area. The area is characterized by the split between the downtown and its neighborhood to the west caused by I-95. The reconnection of the neighborhoods over I-95 will be one of the goals of this plan.

**Traffic Improvements**

A number of Traffic Improvement projects and studies are underway in neighborhoods throughout the city. Traffic calming studies are underway in Upper South Providence, Silver Lake, Elmwood, and West Broadway to address concerns of excessive traffic volumes and speeds. The planning division works with the consultants and landscape architects to manage these projects. Engineering studies are being completed for The Summit neighborhood and Fox Point, to begin the implementation of traffic calming measures recommended in previous studies.

**Jewelry District**

The Planning Division worked with the Jewelry district Association to draft new zoning for the D-2 zoning district, which encompasses the majority of the Jewelry District. Height, transparency, parking lots, and landscaping will all be more tightly controlled in this growing residential area.

**II. Regulatory Review**

In addition to preparing plans, the Planning Division is also responsible for conducting a number of on-going project reviews and for coordinating projects with other agencies, such as the City

Department of Planning and Development

Plan Commission, the Providence Redevelopment Agency, The Providence Historic District Commission, the Downcity Review Committee, and various City Council Committees such as Ordinance Committee, Urban Redevelopment, Renewal & Planning and Public Works.

A. Providence City Plan Commission (CPC) - Meets the third Tuesday of each month

The City Plan Commission is charged with preparing a comprehensive plan for the city; submitting advisory opinions and recommendations to the City Council on all zoning amendments; reviewing, approving and submitting to the City Council the capital improvement plan for the City (prepared by the Department); reviewing and approving master plans for all medical and higher educational institutions in Providence; and responding to other matters referred by the Mayor, City Council or other agencies. The Department enforces the *Development Review Regulations* adopted by the City Plan Commission. These regulations govern all subdivision and land development projects in Providence.

In 2001, staff reviewed and approved 57 administrative subdivisions. The CPC, with staff assistance, reviewed and approved 11 minor subdivisions and four major land development projects. The CPC also reviewed and approved four institutional master plans for educational and health care institutions. It reviewed eight referrals from the City Council Public Works Committee for street abandonments and easements and four referrals from the Ordinance Committee for zoning amendments. Finally, the CPC approved the City's Capital Improvement Program for fiscal years 2002-2006.

Capital Improvement Program

Planning Division Staff prepared and presented the City's five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to the City Plan Commission and the Finance Department. The CIP details capital requests from each City department. It analyzes and prioritizes these requests with respect to the City's planning goals as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

B. Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA) - Meets the second Thursday of each month.

Among the many services required for the PRA, the Planning Division reviews development plans, prepares redevelopment plans and their amendments, presents the plans to neighborhood groups and the City Council Committee on URRP and monitors development proposals.

C. Providence Historic District Commission (PHDC) - Meets the fourth Monday of each month.

Department of Planning and Development

The PHDC's purpose is to oversee the preservation of the approximately 1,850 structures in the City's seven local residential historic districts and the Industrial and Commercial Buildings District. In March of 2002, the Providence City Council passed an amendment to the Providence Zoning Ordinance that created a new landmark historic district targeting historic industrial and commercial buildings located throughout the city. Buildings included in this new district are subject to review by the Providence Historic District Commission for any major renovations or proposed demolition. In addition to the new regulation imposed on these buildings, a number of financial incentives have been made available for repairs, renovations and improvements to these buildings.

The PHDC is the agency of city government responsible for reviewing proposed changes to buildings and sites within any of the seven local historic districts. Between July 2001 and June 2002, the HDC reviewed 196 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

D. Downcity Review Committee (DRC) – Meets the second Monday of each month

The DRC is the agency of city government responsible for reviewing proposed changes to buildings and sites within the Downcity District. Approval from the DRC must be obtained before getting a building permit or doing any exterior replacements, alterations, site improvements, new construction, demolition, and moving of structures. An application for a Certificate of Design Approval is required for any exterior work on a District property; a Certificate must be issued before such work can begin. Between July 2001 and June 2002, the DRC reviewed 26 applications for Certificates of Design Approval.

E. City Council Committees – Variable meeting times

The staff often advises and prepares ordinances for consideration by the City Council Committee on Ordinances for all zoning text and map changes; the Committee on Urban Redevelopment, Renewal & Planning (URRP) for all redevelopment plans and amendments; and the Committee on Public Works for street abandonment. The division also works regularly with the Finance Committee and other committees. These often include preparation of legal advertisements in compliance with state statute, presentation at public hearings and submission of written texts and ordinances.

F. Environmental Reviews

Environmental reviews are completed for projects in which federal funds will be expended. The purpose of environmental review is to ensure compliance with federal, state and local regulations. Over 200 environmental reviews are processed in a typical year. In 2001/2002 there were 138 environmental reviews prepared by Department staff.

G. Zoning Petitions

Petitions for zoning variances or special use permits (filed with the Zoning Board of Review) are reviewed and written comments on the impact of these proposals on the city's growth and

development are submitted to the ZBR. Every month an average of twenty (20) zoning petitions are reviewed. In 2001/2002 there were 101 zoning referrals.

### **III. Other Planning**

The Planning Division is often called upon to respond to opportunities that bring outside funding or benefits to the City through the state and federal governments. These include:

#### **A. Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT)**

The City works with RIDOT in a number of ways. Staff serves on the statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Staff prepares the bi-annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that enable the City to be eligible for millions of dollars of state and federal highway grants for such projects as the relocation of I-195, CMAQ projects, bikeways and enhancements of neighborhood streets.

#### **B. Brownfields Showcase Community**

The Woonasquatucket River Greenway project was the basis of the City's designation as a Brownfields Showcase Community. The City is the lead agency in this partnership program that includes RIDEM and The Providence Plan. Under the Showcase Community program, the City has developed new working relationships with federal agencies with a focus on brownfield redevelopment. The award of \$600,000 from the FHWA's Transportation Community and System Program, is in part due to the Showcase designation.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING

The Community and Development and Housing functions are typically the next step for plan implementation in the City. When appropriate, the plans developed are placed in the context of the City's Consolidated Planning Strategy (CPS) which is the policy guidance for the allocation of the Community Development Block Grant, HOME, Emergency Shelter Grant and Housing for Persons with AIDS program. In 2001, these entitlement programs totaled \$11Million in funding targeted to providing opportunities for low and moderate income citizens on an individual and area basis; the elimination of slums and blight and provide for urgent community needs. The Department's Community Development and Housing functions can be divided into functional areas. They are:

### ➤ Consolidated Planning Strategy – The Providence Vision

The CPS is a document that is required by regulation and is overseen by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Based on the needs identified through the consolidated planning process, the City, with input through the consultation process, the Consolidated Plan Steering Committee and the seven focus group meetings held through out the City developed a strategic plan to achieve Providence's Vision.

The City will target resources for neighborhood revitalization efforts, affordable housing initiatives, neighborhood facilities, park and recreation facilities, infrastructure improvements and public services to CDBG eligible areas and to low moderate-income persons. A summary of the plan is attached as appendix A.

Based on collaboration with residents, service consumers and providers, the special needs community, youth, neighborhood associations, business owners and developers and City and State community development and planning staff, the following represents a consensus vision for the City of Providence.

*The City of Providence shall be a community that has achieved neighborhood and economic stabilization by providing housing opportunities – homeownership and rental –by strengthening our neighborhoods through economic opportunities, developing green spaces and recreational opportunities and making our neighborhoods safe, clean and welcoming to all; and by strengthening the public service network by providing a balance of services that all residents can access.*

*The Providence Vision for Housing includes:*

- *Addressing substandard conditions and lead paint hazards*
- *Taking advantage of the existing housing stock through the rehabilitation of such*
- *Preserving and promoting housing choice*
- *Providing appropriate housing to special needs families and individuals*

*The Providence Vision for Neighborhood Revitalization includes:*

## Department of Planning and Development

- *Expanding economic opportunities through business development and support, transportation changes and "reconnection" to Down City*
- *Development of new green space, decreasing density and the provision of residential parking*
- *Increasing public safety and neighborhood perception through infrastructure improvements*
- *A plan for each neighborhood that integrates housing, economic development and quality of life issues.*
- *Rehabilitation of commercial structures through environmental mediation and preservation when appropriate.*

*The Providence Vision for the Public Service Network includes:*

- *Support and develop delivery capacity of community centers*
- *An assessment of current services and retooling to meet new needs*
- *Balanced recreational opportunities for all ages*
- *Outreach and inclusion - particularly of youth - of all cultures and languages into the public service network*

The City received a HUD "Best Practice" award from HUD for citizen participation throughout the process.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/ HOUSING – the process**

- **Community Development and Neighborhood Outreach** – As the Department charged with the oversight and implementation of the HUD consolidated programs – CDBG, HOME, ESG, HOPWA and now Lead Paint Abatement – a major part of the mandate is to prepare all required annual plans and certifications for HUD for receipt of these funds. All annual plans are an outgrowth of the City's Consolidated Planning Strategy -the five-year plan described above - that sets priorities in the area of community development and housing needs. The annual plan document is the product of extensive public participation and outreach resulting from a formal application process.
- Staff work includes review for eligibility and ultimately, presentation to the Urban Redevelopment, Renewal and Planning Committee of the City Council for approval of a balanced annual plan and submission to HUD by the Mayor after a public hearing and comment period.
- Community Development and Housing needs are constantly being evaluated, programs monitored and performance standards applied. The department works extensively with neighborhood organizations, advocacy groups, city departments and elected officials to implement the annual plan. The City received a HUD "Best Practice" award for citizen participation throughout the process. On an annual basis the City files the Consolidated Annual Planning and Evaluation Report that allows citizens the opportunity to review accomplishments and programs.

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**Department of Planning and Development**

- **Grant management** – A critical piece of the Department's internal and external efforts are grants management activities that ultimately result in the implementation of the annual plan. The Department initiates and monitors contracts with over 80 subgrantees through quarterly reporting and on site programmatic monitoring by staff. The range of programs that are administered range from small capital improvements to community centers to multiyear neighborhood revitalization projects. This Department is responsible for the enforcement of Davis/Bacon wage rate enforcement (where applicable), EEO/FHEO standards and monitoring, including assistance to Minority and Women owned businesses.

A major piece of the management effort is centered on technical assistance to subgrantees. DPD staff provides an array of services including bidding, construction and inspection services for projects as well as program development and implementation. Housing production and preservation activities are another major component of this division. Services and programs are available to assist individual homeowners with rehabilitation services, first time homeowner programs and rental production activities. Two programs in particular – ESG and HOPWA – are targeted to these two distinct populations and provide not only housing, but supportive services as well.

**Housing Outreach and Programming**

The City uses the Department of Planning and Development PNHC to provide a comprehensive housing delivery system to its residents. Its non-profit status allows it to seek housing funds from a wide variety of sources, some unavailable to city government alone. Its board of directors encourages a diverse range of housing strategies and ideas. The partnership between the City and its CDCs promises to bring additional talent to a common housing program. Funding gaps can be filled more easily when need is discovered. The coordination of all housing funds under one umbrella has been found by the City to be a most effective housing delivery system. Community Development Block Grant funds for housing are now tied to CDCs according to a performance formula; awarding funds based on units of housing produced or rehabilitated over a "rolling" three-year period.

Housing rehabilitation and residential construction activities in the City are funded through the HOME program. Non-profit Community Development Corporations serve as the development arm/partner of the City. DPD solicits Request for Proposals throughout the year. The Operations Committee of PHNC evaluates the proposals submitted by CDCs. To be considered the proposals must be in substantial conformance with the City's Consolidated Planning Strategy, Comprehensive Plan and any existing sub-plan, which has been approved by the specific neighborhood in which the rehabilitation or construction is to take place. All proposals are evaluated using the same objective criteria.

DPD coordinates this activity, encouraging increased levels of collaboration amongst CDCs and increased production overall. Projects generally include mix of approximately 70% homeownership rehabilitation or new construction, 20% rental rehabilitation and 10% special needs rehabilitation or new construction. Home ownership proposals involving new construction are usually single family with multi-family usually being rehabilitation.



### Community Development Block Grant

The Community Development Block Grant is comprised of five main programs. These programs include Housing, Public Infrastructure, Public Services, Public Facilities, and Economic Development. The table below and accompanying graphic illustrate the dollars and percentage of resources devoted to each of these major categories.

<b>CDBG Activity</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
<b>Public Facilities</b>	\$1,368,286.00 (19%)
<b>Public Infrastructure</b>	\$956,800.00 (13%)
<b>Economic Development</b>	\$1,087,230.00 (15%)
<b>Housing</b>	\$912,484.00 (12%)
<b>Public Services</b>	\$1,548,000.00 (21%)
<b>Administration</b>	\$1,473,200.00 (20%)
<b>Total</b>	\$7,346,000.00

Under each of these programs the City undertakes many projects. Each project is designed to maximize the impact on the City's low and moderate-income population, while addressing the national objectives of the Community Development Block Grant. This section will summarize the accomplishments in each of these five programs.

#### Public Facilities and Capital Improvements

The City expended Community Development Block Grant funds on several public infrastructure projects during fiscal year 2001/2002. The City's objective in public infrastructure projects is to revitalize the streetscape, making an area more comfortable, attractive and safe for neighborhood residents and visitors while encouraging new development and investment. Allocations of CDBG dollars also go to community and service centers to address ADA compliance issues, new program requirements and building expansion.

\$428,600 in capital improvements funding assisted seven community service centers – South Providence Boys & Girls Club, Providence City Arts for Youth (City Arts), South Providence Development Corporation, The Center, RI Indian Council (Algonquin House) and Trinity Encore as well as related neighborhood improvements.

The West End, Washington Park and targeted areas of Mt. Hope, Smith Hill, Silver Lake and Mt. Pleasant received allocations of \$75,000 each to leverage bond funds committed and expended on sidewalk/roadway improvements, park improvements and public facility improvements.

**Equal Housing Opportunity Program**

The City's Equal Housing Opportunity Program is administered through the Providence Human Relations Commission and funded with Community Development Block Grant administrative funds. The Equal Housing Opportunity Program undertakes a variety of activities to further equal housing initiatives throughout the City.

A Landlord Tenant Handbook was distributed to 47 agencies throughout the city.

**CDBG PROGRAM MONITORING**

All CDBG programs are monitored yearly for fiscal and programmatic compliance. If there are findings or concerns noted, the agency is asked to respond with a compliance action for each finding or concern noted.

The City's 36 public service programs are monitored on a yearly basis by the PROCAP staff as well. Performance reports are collected on a quarterly basis for all programs and submitted to DPD for IDIS input.

Job monitoring is a critical component of the PEDC revolving loan program. Contract goals are established at contract signing and are established by the size of the loan. \$30,000 of PEDC money will trigger a job creation of 1 position. Loans are reviewed every six months for progress. Again, all monitoring visits are on site and technical assistance provided if deemed necessary.

**Housing Division Accomplishments**

In this program year, a total of \$1,646,882 in HOME funds were invested in 37 housing units through a number of neighborhood non-profit housing developers.

**Rental Project Inventory**

- Total projects monitored with rental units (40)
- Total rental units in monitored projects (89)
- Total projects requiring on site inspections (5)
- Total rental units inspected (10)

**Neighborhood Bond Funded Programs \$ 2,454,627**

The City Council in 2001 dedicated \$4,000,000 in a new "neighborhood bond funds" for the following housing programs and the Lead Hazard Control program. During this program year the following funds were committed:

- The **Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance program** committed \$500,000 to provide an incentive for (202) first time home buyers to purchase homes in Providence neighborhoods. These 0% loans of up to \$2,500 are payable when the house is sold.
- The **Employee Advantage Homebuyer program** provides an incentive for police, firefighters, teachers and other municipal employees to live in the City of Providence. The program makes available a forgivable loan of from \$2,500 to \$15,000 for down payment and closing costs. The amount available is determined by the homeownership rate in the neighborhood in which the home is to be purchased. The maximum amount is targeted to neighborhoods with the lowest rates. The program committed \$280,000 to provide funding for (55) city employees to live in Providence.
- The **Home Repair program** committed \$582,125.44 to provide funding for (53) homeowners to make safety and/or code violation repairs to their homes. The loan amount is up to \$17,000 when combined with exterior painting. These 0-6% loans are payable monthly for a term of up to 10 years.
- The **Rental Rehabilitation program** committed \$78,685 to provide funding for (8) Providence residents to make safety and/or code violation repairs to their non-owner occupied properties. The loan amount may be up to \$5,000. These 6% loans are payable monthly for a term of up to 10 years.
- The **Emergency Repair program** committed \$97,191 to provide funding for (13) low income families to make emergency repairs to their homes. The deferred loan amount is up to \$10,000. These 0% loans are payable upon sale or transfer of the home.

#### **DPD's Lead Safe Housing Efforts**

Lead hazard reduction has been identified in the City's Comprehensive Planning Strategy as one of the most overwhelming and urgent housing needs. The City of Providence's Department of Planning and Development was awarded a HUD grant of \$3.9 Million (1999) to implement a lead hazard control program. In addition the City of Providence committed \$800,000 from its first Neighborhood Bond issue and an additional \$1,500,000 from its second Neighborhood Bond Issue to reinforce its' commitment to eliminating the lead hazard in the homes in the city's neighborhoods.

When these funds have been fully expended the program will have made approximately (525) privately owned housing units lead safe. To be in the program Homes must be owned and occupied by low-income families with children under the age of 6 or be occupied by an expectant mother.

- **Lead Based Paint Hazard Control program**, funds have been designated to provide homeowners with grants, loans, or a combination of the two to make their property "lead-safe". The maximum combined loan and grant amount per dwelling unit is \$12,500.

During the above program year \$784,055 was committed to make (34) homes containing (104) living units lead safe.

- **Education and Community Outreach:**

During this reporting period, (70) childhood lead poisoning education and prevention classes were held in primary and secondary lead target areas at neighborhood community centers. Lead information spots in Spanish were held on Univision Channel 27 and lead infomercials in Spanish were aired on other channels. Lead poisoning prevention training was provided to parents, and day care providers at day care centers. Educational material on continuing lead management practices was provided as followed up information to landlords and tenants of completed lead projects. In addition, training in lead hazard reduction skills will be provided.

### **Healthy Homes Program**

The City of Providence in June of 2000 was awarded a Healthy Homes Grant in the amount of \$1,039,204 to be integrated with the Lead Hazard Reduction program to substantially reduce the prevalence of asthma causing conditions, which promote allergens from mites, cockroaches and molds.

It is projected that (56) units in (26) homes will receive healthy homes treatments. In addition another (33) units in (14) homes will receive smoke detectors, CO detectors and a written healthy homes assessment.

### **Housing for Persons with AIDS**

The HOPWA program is unlike any of the grant programs administered by the City due to its large geographic target area. The HOPWA program administered by the City serves all of Rhode Island (except Newport County) and the Southeast Massachusetts from the Attleboros to Fall River. As the majority of AIDS cases in the target area are in Rhode Island, the City of Providence has contracted with AIDS CARE/Ocean State to administer 89.5% of the funds, based on the needs assessment and strategic plan – *Housing for Persons with AIDS in Rhode Island* – prepared for RIHMFC, Family Aids Center for Treatment and Support (FACTS) and Sunrise Community Housing. (NB: FACTS and Sunrise have merged into AIDS CARE/Ocean State)

The CPS funding plan for HOPWA essentially seeks to stabilize funding to agencies, continue with existing proven programs and fill in the gaps identified. The funding was allocated to the following activities:

15 rental units AIDS Care Ocean State (average rent \$625)	\$95,179
12 rental units House of Compassion	\$56,000
8 rental units/supportive operation AIDS Care Ocean State	\$5,573
Housing Referral Center AIDS Care Ocean State	\$223,848

The Massachusetts funding, administered by the Fall River Community Development Agency, was allocated to the following:

STARR	\$24,200
Moveable Feast	\$20,000

### **Emergency Shelter Grant and the Continuum of Care**

The City of Providence received \$261,000 through the Emergency Shelter Grant program. The City funded nine agencies that serve the homeless and those in danger of being homeless through a variety of programs. The City, although it has not filed its own continuum of care plan, works cooperatively with the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIH) and the RI Coalition for the Homeless and the Interagency Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing to assist with the implementation of the State's consolidated effort, of which the City is a part. The City's funding strategy and prioritization are drawn largely from the Continuum of Care (COC) document. The agencies funded individually support each stage of the COC that has been established. Traveler's Aid conducts outreach to persons in the street, including crisis services and referrals to agencies such as Amos House, Interim House, Urban League, People to End Homelessness and the Women's Center and to transitional housing such as McAuley Village. Referrals are then made to permanent housing at Advent House or a section 8 certificate or voucher depending on the persons family and or disability status.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Department promotes economic growth by helping to finance private development, implementing incentive programs that encourage employers to create and retain jobs, and providing opportunity for business growth and development. The Department provides financial assistance for commercial rehabilitation, the lease/purchase of new or used equipment, acquisition of real property, working capital expenses, and storefront improvements.

### PROGRAMS

**The Economic Development Division administers the following programs:**

Providence Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) Revolving Loan Fund – The Revolving Loan Fund of the Providence Economic Development Corporation is intended to assist businesses to locate and expand in Providence. The loans made through the PEDC Revolving Loan Fund are a major source of Departmental activity that helps create and retain jobs. During FY2001, the PEDC approved 29 loans through CDBG, Section 108, and Industrial (EDA) funding, with a total Project Cost in the amount of \$9,824,268.00 and total PEDC funding in the amount of \$2,873,000.00, which allowed for the creation of 348 jobs and the retention of 298 jobs. Since 1991, 356 loans have been approved, thereby creating 2525 jobs and retaining 2322 jobs. Total Project funds, in the amount of \$81,500,000.00, have been invested throughout the city during the period of 1991 through 2002, with PEDC participation totaling \$34,160,000.00, and private investment funds totaling \$47,300,000.00, which represents a 1:1.4 match of public and private investment. Of the above loans approved since 1991, 61 were to minority owned businesses and 101 were to woman owned businesses.

### **PEDC Projects**

One of the recent businesses assisted by the PEDC is the restoration of the Monohasset Mill Building. PEDC provided a \$650,000.00 loan to assist finance the acquisition and renovation of this historic industrial mill complex located at 532 Kinsley Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island. This project consists of seven historic mill buildings constructed in 1886. The developers, made up of several local artists, will renovate and convert this property into 24 artist live/work units. The total project cost is estimated to be \$3.7 million. The project financing is in consortium between PEDC, BankRI, and owner equity. Interior demolition commenced in Spring of 2002 and construction is expected to be completed within 18 months.

Storefront Program – The Storefront Program provides financial assistance to business and property owners for façade improvements to their buildings. The program, directed toward neighborhood commercial districts, can make up to \$25,000.00 available for exterior improvements.

Business Liaison Program – The Department maintains a business liaison program to assist businesses in accessing city services. Staff in the Economic Development Division assist local

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businesses by helping to identify the steps that must be taken to achieve a goal or project and by contacting the agency or department that must approve or permit the proposed project.

Enterprise Zone Programs – The city is benefiting from two enterprise zone programs. The first is the Rhode Island Enterprise Zone Program. This innovative program provides financial incentives and technical assistance to businesses located in the zones, thereby stimulating economic growth, job opportunities and business expansion and development in targeted urban areas. All activities are coordinated through the Department. This state program designed to give businesses a break in the state corporate taxes for each new job they create. In the two zones in Providence, 60 new businesses signed up to participate in the program. As a result of the program, staff is working with businesses that are interested in relocating to Providence. The second is the Federal Enterprise/Empowerment Program. This program funds a number of projects that help in job training and economic assistance for designated areas in the city.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – is a listing of projects statewide that meet the state's economic development criteria. The Department, every April, reviews the existing listing and determines what new projects should be filed. For a project to be eligible for assistance from the federal Economic Development Administration, it must be listed in the CEDS and have a high ranking. The major projects identified in FY2001 CEDS were the Southside Investment Partnership (Southside/Broad Street Initiative), Woonasquatucket Greenway/Brownfield and New Cities.

## FUNDING SOURCES

The Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Grant and Section 108 Loan Application to Recapitalize the PEDC Revolving Loan Fund – PEDC was awarded a \$5 Million Section 108 Guaranteed Loan to recapitalize its Revolving Loan Fund Program. This program provides loan assistance to businesses that are located in distressed areas of Providence. The application was made in conjunction with an application for a \$500,000.00 Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Grant, which is being used to create specific incentive for hiring disadvantaged, unemployed or underemployed City residents. It is estimated that approximately 80 businesses will be assisted and over 500 new jobs will be created through funding of the PEDC Revolving Loan Fund Program. Presently, PEDC has provided approximately \$758,000.00 in Section 108 loans to 16 businesses which is expected to create 76 jobs and retain 108 jobs.

### EDI Projects

**Cleanscape, Inc.** – As a subsidiary of South Providence Redevelopment Corporation, Cleanscape, Inc., provides certain services throughout the local area neighborhoods. To assist in this endeavor, through an economic development incentive grant, the department has provided grant funds. The activities funded are specifically for job creation. Through this grant, the department has financed a portion of the salaries for Landscape Supervisor, Operations Supervisor, and a Recycling Service Specialist.

**Lead Abaters, Inc.** – Through an Economic Development Initiative Grant, the department has provided grant funds to establish a micro-enterprise training and development program for lead

abatement. This program is funding certain capital costs to initiate a program whereby individuals were trained and employed in the area of lead abatement.

**Economic Development Administration Grant Application for the Gorham Manufacturing Site** – In 1994, the City of Providence took tax title to the former Gorham Manufacturing Co. site. Environmental problems on the site have been remediated. The Department has been awarded an \$870,000.00 Federal Economic Development Administration grant to assist in financing redevelopment costs that include: building demolition, upgrading all infrastructure, and acquisition of land along Reservoir Avenue to create new access to the site. During this fiscal year all buildings have been cleared and remediation of asbestos has taken place. A developer has been designated and construction of approximately 200,000 square feet of retail space began in the Spring of 2001. Churchill and Banks, the project developer, constructed a 40,000 square foot super market. Infrastructure and new entrance have been completed. The YMCA is planning to construct and operate a multi-faceted community oriented center at the Gorham site. Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2003.

### **MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

**17 Gordon Avenue Project** – Through the assistance of various entities, the South Providence Redevelopment Corporation is in the process of developing 17 Gordon Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island, and tow (2) vacant lots across the street. This property was purchased by SPDC in December 1999. The property has been vacant for a number of years and consists of 26, 000 square feet. The property will be developed in to an energy efficient incubator. The City of Providence, in conjunction with the developer, has been granted a One Million Dollar (\$1,000,000.00) EDA grant and a Five Hundred Thousand Dollar (\$500,000.00) CDBG loan to assist in financing the total project cost of Two Million Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,200,000.00). PEDC has approved a \$362,700.00 loan which was used in part for the acquisition of the building.

**Public Safety Facility** – A major development project undertaken through the efforts of the Department is the development of the new site of their 134,000 square foot Public Safety Facility, with construction cost of approximately \$50 million. This facility is the largest public project to be constructed since the Civic Center was constructed in the 1960's. Construction of this facility commenced in the Summer of 2000 and was completed April 2002. The day-to-day oversight of this project development was coordinated through the Division of Economic Development and through the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

**Wasserman/JPI Development** – The department has been in the process of assisting with the development of PRA Parcel One, located in the Promenade Redevelopment District. The primary developer, Wasserman Realty, LLC., has merged Parcel One with the former cold storage site to comprise a 12-acre development site. Presently, JPI (the tenant of Wasserman) is constructing a 340 residential rental housing project on two-thirds of the parcel. Construction is estimated to be completed by mid 2003. The balance of the parcel will be developed for retail use by the Wasserman's. The total project cost is estimated to be approximately Seventy Million Dollars (\$70,000,000.00). The permitting process for construction is underway with construction which began early Spring 2001.



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT / SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Project Management Division is the implementation arm of the department where capital construction is concerned. The Project Management Division supervises all construction work carried out by the Department of Planning and Development on behalf of the Providence Redevelopment Agency as well as all neighborhood improvements funded through the Community Development Block Grant Program. All projects, once the planning process has been completed, are turned over to the Project Management Division for implementation.

Depending on the project, this can involve preliminary investigation and surveying, design, preparation and execution of engineering plans, computations, drawings, specifications, quantity and cost estimates, supervision of new construction, reconstruction maintenance and repairs, remodeling, additions, alterations and preparation of contracts for public improvements in renewal and development projects, engineering inspections and testing, supervision and inspection of demolition activities, as well as the supervision of the recording of engineering data, plans, maps and other technical data. Many projects are completed each year.

The Division is also responsible for all departmental Real Estate functions. This includes acquisition and disposition of real property, negotiations for purchasing, leasing or disposition, preparation of contracts for real estate appraisals, title examinations, documents related to condemnation proceedings on behalf of the Redevelopment Agency, acquisition and disposition appraisals for various city agencies, analysis of professional appraisals, contracts for land use and marketability studies. Preparation of documents relating to City Council proceedings and foreclosure of tax reverted properties is also handled by the division.

New projects this year include:

- **Chalkstone Ave @ Roger Williams Hospital** – Widening of the road and beautification of the area around the hospital entrance
- **Stop & Shop /YMCA** - This continuation of the former Gorham site project has realized the opening of a new supermarket as well as the transfer of property for the new home of the YMCA and beginning work on a firefighter's museum.
- **Jewelry District Tree Planting** – This continuation of jewelry district improvements completed tree planting and bollard installation.
- **North Main Street Tree Planting** – This project completes the North Main Street Improvements.
- **Pleasant Street Revitalization** – This project provided for new sidewalks and street trees on this 3<sup>rd</sup> ward street.
- **Otha Boone Lodge** – This project provided for a new parking lot for this non-profit in South Providence.
- **Silver Lake Improvements** – This project provided new sidewalks and fencing at various locations in the Silver Lake neighborhood.
- **2 Thomas Street** – This project consisted of new brick sidewalks and street tree planting.

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- **Ward 15 sidewalks** – New sidewalks are currently being installed on Messer St. and surrounding locations in Ward 15.
- **Wayland Square Speed Table** – This project provides for a speed table for traffic calming at Wayland Square.
- **Wickenden Street** – New sidewalks, street trees and decorative tree wells have been installed on Wickenden Street from Governor St. to I-195.
- **Traffic Calming** – Traffic calming projects have been undertaken or planned for Wickenden St. Ward 9 Ward 11, Ward 10, West Broadway and other locations throughout the city.
- **Charles St.** – New sidewalks have been installed for several miles on Charles and adjacent Streets.

In addition to the above projects, the division continues to fulfill its ongoing responsibilities for oversight of PRA properties as well as other real estate and project oversight issues.

The Division has continued to coordinate and oversee the capital improvements funded through the 1997 Neighborhood Improvement Program bond issue. In addition, another \$50M bond referendum entitled the Neighborhood & Capital Improvement Program was approved in the fall of 2000. In April, 2001, the City Council approved an Ordinance outlining authorized allocations for designated projects within the 15 Wards as well as several citywide initiatives.

The Division continues to work cooperatively and effectively with numerous city departments, the city council and various community based neighborhood organizations. This ongoing synergy has allowed us to maximize the impact of these two historical efforts to implement urgently needed capital improvements to Providence's aging infrastructure.

The following is a summary of activity completed for the period covered by this report:

**Neighborhood & Capital Improvement Projects:****Street Resurfacing & Sidewalk Replacement:**

Planning for another citywide street resurfacing and sidewalk program commenced during the later portion of the year. With the assistance of the Department of Public Works, information was accumulated and forwarded to the members of the City Council for their review and consideration. A timeline was agreed to for the solicitation of bids and the awarding of contracts. If all the required elements of the program were successfully completed, it was anticipated that construction would commence in the spring of 2002.

**Parks:**

The city successfully completed an ambitious program to upgrade and refurbish the existing neighborhood system under the 1997 bond program. Under that program over 50 neighborhood parks were renovated or newly constructed. Despite this success, additional park projects were requested. With the approval of additional bond funds in 2000, other park projects are contemplated through the support and assistance of the members of the City Council. The Parks Department has been reviewing and discussing these potential projects with the City Council and several developments will be placed out for bid in the spring of 2002.

**Elimination of Blight:**

Although there is no comprehensive program to demolish a significant number of abandoned and neglected properties under the recently approved bond program, some individual Council members have identified specific blighted properties in their ward for razing. These demolitions will take place under the administration of the Department of Inspections and Standards.

**Commercial Districts & Community Centers:**

A citywide program was initiated to address physical improvements to several neighborhood shopping areas. Based upon the need to upgrade their appearance and enhance their economic viability, five to seven commercial corridors will be designated for sidewalk replacement, street tree plantings, lighting and other improvements. In addition, as was the case with the 1997 bond program, various Council members will allocate additional funds to augment this neighborhood based program.

Several Community and Senior Centers will be designated for funding by Council members to assist with expansion and renovations to better serve their clientele. In addition, a number of community based not for profit agencies will also receive funding for capital improvements and expansion. These organizations provide a myriad of important health, social and educational services to the community. During a period when other financial sources of support (i.e. United Way, etc.) have been reduced, investing in their capital infrastructure allows these organizations the ability to use existing funding sources for administrative costs while still moving forward with essential physical improvements.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS:**

**Black Repertory Theater:** A combination of bond funds totaling \$500,000 was granted to Providence Black Repertory Company assisting them with the purchase of the building at 276 Westminster Street. This location will become their new home.

**American Tourister Redevelopment Project:** A combination of bond funds assisted with the property acquisition and environmental remediation of the former American Tourister manufacturing plant on Houghton Street in the North End. The Providence Redevelopment Agency is actively marketing this property for redevelopment.

**Targeted Rehabilitation and Reuse:** The conceptual review and design to redevelop Allens Avenue, Promenade Mill and the area over Rt. 95 continues. This initiative has the potential to generate thousands of jobs and significant property taxes.

**Relocate Traveler's Aid & YMCA:** \$2.0million was granted Traveler's Aid Society of RI to assist with the acquisition of the YMCA building. This transaction not only assists Traveler's Aid in their relocation from the central city to Broad Street to a more functional facility, but also permits the YMCA's construction of a new building to better serve the South Side and the West End

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**Roger Williams Botanical Center:** Currently in the planning & design stage, once completed this facility will provide horticultural education to people of all ages and a year round tourist attraction not just for the city but the entire region. The excellent reputation of Roger Williams Park which receives over 3.5 million visitors annually from all over New England will be greatly enhanced by the addition of this exciting world-class attraction.

## Appendix A

The Department provides technical assistance to a number of City boards, agencies and Commissions as follows:

### City Plan Commission

George Calcagni, Chair  
James H. Leach, Vice Chair  
Samuel Limiadi  
Harrison Bilodeau  
Steven Durkee

### Ex-Officio Members

Robert Ricci (Mayor/Designee)  
Bryan Principe (Council President/Designee)

The City Plan Commission is charged with the preparation of a comprehensive plan for the City; the submission of advisory opinions and recommendations on all zoning amendments; review and approval for submission to the city council of the capital improvement plan for the City; and other requests, reviews or recommendations as referred by the Mayor, City Council or other agencies.

### Providence Economic Development Corporation (PEDC)

Kenneth Dulgarian, Chair  
Joseph Caffey, Vice Chair  
Anthony Carcieri, Treasurer  
Frank Benell  
Mark Harriman  
Renee Bailey  
Mark Feinstein

### Legal Counsel

Joshua Teverow  
Alfred Thibodeau

The PEDC provides financial and technical assistance to established businesses interested in relocation to or within Providence or to the expansion of businesses in the city.

### Historic District Commission

Clarke Schoettle, Acting Chair  
Catherine Lund  
Cornelis J. deBoer, AIA

Mildred Parrillo  
Glen Fontecchio  
Neal Kaplan  
Erin Chase

City Council Appointees

Councilwoman Patricia Nolan  
Councilman John Lombardi

The Commission has design review powers over any exterior change to a property within a local historic district. At present, there are seven (7) local districts. The Commission adopts its own operating rules and regulations, as well as design review standards and guidelines. The Commission works with the Department of Inspections and Standards to improve enforcement of zoning violations in historic districts.

Downcity District Design Review Committee

Members appointed by Mayor  
Guy Abelson, Chair  
Elizabeth Chace, Vice Chair  
Alan Chile  
Barabara Macaulay  
Clark Schoettle, Acting Historic District Commission Chair  
Michael Everett, Mayoral Alternate  
Dr. Robert Pressman, PHDC Alternate

The Committee is responsible for directing development in the downtown+, protecting the historic and architectural character of the downtown, promoting the arts and entertainment district and supporting residential uses in the downtown.

Providence Off-Street Public Parking Corporation (POSPP)

Michael S. VanLeesten, acting chair  
William Benell,  
Thomas J. Reilly  
David G. Dillon  
Marvin Holland

Bond Counsel

Karen Grande, Tillinghast, Licht, Perkins & Smith

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The purpose of the corporation is to aid in the development of off street parking in the city. POSPP can provide tax exempt financing for structured or surfaced parking. All previous projects have been in the Downcity.

Public Building Authority

Lloyd Granoff, Chair  
Dianne Witman  
Donna Capoverde, CPA  
Stanley Weiss

The PBA purpose is to provide financing and construction services for municipal facilities and projects. The various projects are funded through the issuance of revenue bonds that are secured by leases with the city. The PBA may only develop projects upon the request of the mayor and with the approval of the city council.

Providence Redevelopment Agency

Henry Kates, Chair  
Leslie Gardner, Vice Chair  
Paul Brooks  
Robert Montecalvo  
Jose Monteiro  
Councilman Ronald W. Allen  
Councilman Luis A. Aponte

The Redevelopment Agency was created in 1947 to address the problems of slum and blight. The Agency's purpose is "to work toward the elimination and prevention of substandard areas and their replacement through redevelopment by well planned, integrated, stable, safe and healthful neighborhoods." The Agency is currently working to stabilize the city's neighborhoods through the development of new owner occupied housing and the creation of jobs with the development of industrial parks in the city.