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## **Available land at Quonset Business Park becoming scarce**

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The numbers tell a compelling story. Quonset Business Park is home to 8,800 jobs with 168 companies doing business in a wide range of industries. More than 2,500 jobs were created since 2005. In 2011, the Port of Davisville was the seventh largest automobile importer in North America. These are numbers that reinforce Quonset's reputation as a key engine driving the state's economic development and job growth.

But there are also numbers that tell another story. The very existence of more companies and more jobs ultimately translates into a decreasing number of opportunities to locate here. There are good parcels still available, but as Quonset Business Park continues to succeed, the number of acres available for new companies is shrinking.

To date, there are 35 prepared sites available to developers. And while that number suggests opportunities for new businesses to discover the beauty and amenities of Quonset, it is in sharp contrast to the widely held notion that the land available at this former Navy base is limitless. In fact, of the 3,207 acres that comprise Quonset Business Park, just 1,401 are considered developable. The rest is either open space (689 acres) or owned or operated by other entities, like the town of North Kingstown or the R.I. Airport Corp. Of the acres available for development, 513 have been sold and 422 have been leased.

What remains is 463 acres. And of those acres, 109 are currently reserved or in negotiation.

47 are held under option by Deepwater Wind, while others are held by existing tenants such as Electric Boat. That leaves only 354 acres free for development for new companies looking to establish themselves at the park.

The largest available parcel in the park stands just over 56 acres. The opportunity was created when the Quonset Development Corp. (QDC) combined two previously un-developable parcels in the West Davisville area of the park by purchasing a stretch of land that had separated the two. The majority of the other available parcels is between five and 10 acres and are located throughout the park. Commerce Park, North Davisville, the Gateway, and the waterfront area all feature prime sites ready for immediate development.

While the opportunities are shrinking, businesses considering Quonset will find that doing business here has never been easier. Over the past few years several infrastructure improvements have enhanced the park, with many projects having either been completed or scheduled to be completed in 2012. Those projects include the R.I. Fast Ferry Dock, the Compass Circle Extension, and a series of federal TIGER Projects at the Port of Davisville's Pier 1 and Pier 2.

More than anything, the QDC, in conjunction with state and town officials, has worked diligently over the past year to make the Quonset Business Park a truly business friendly environment. The Site-Readiness Program instituted last year, for example, came directly on the heels of the creation of a "Quonset Zone," a single zoning district assigned to the park as part of an agreement for

uniform development regulations. Developers, accustomed to encountering red tape and endless regulatory hurdles at every turn, are finding Quonset to be a very business-friendly place to do business. The unified process means that all development and re-development projects in the park can proceed at a faster pace than ever before.

Make no mistake; Quonset Business Park is a wonderful place for a business to call home. But the neighborhood is filling up. The available sites are becoming scarce. And the time to act is now.

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