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Rhode Island: Always working on the next big thing

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Rhode Island boasts picturesque coastlines, an authentic New England aura, a rich sense of historical value and some of the best higher education institutions in the world. Not only is the state beautiful and culturally bursting, it is now in the midst of creating a unique opportunity for developers and businesses.

The 195 Redevelopment Commission chairman recently pointed out that Rhode Island can do big things - and do them right. We've moved rivers, moved railroad tracks, and relocated a highway.

We're busy working on the next "big thing," readying for development 20 acres of reclaimed land in Providence that was made available with the relocation of I-195. The property is unique; it arches around the city's riverfront, abutting neighborhoods, the downtown, medical complexes and university campuses.

The state is fully committed to this project and is spending \$40 million dollars to create pad ready sites that are environmentally permitted, that offer state-of-the-art technology and upgraded utilities, and over 8 acres of fully landscaped urban parks.

Subterranean work is taking place as parcels, some without street access, others without electricity, are re-linked to the city from which they'd been cut off for almost 60 years. Crews are finding pipes that date back to the 1800s, and careful environmental consideration has been given to containing soil that still bears evidence of the city's industrial base.

Electric, gas, water and cable conduits are being layered in trenches, with roads and sidewalks constructed on top. 18,000 ft. of new underground electric cable, over 11,000 ft. of new or upgraded gas mains and a mile of new world class broadband infrastructure are being installed.

This finely tuned effort incorporates public and private sector partners as well as state and city administrations. It is an extraordinary collaboration that showcases the political, public and private commitment to creating a business, investor and developer friendly atmosphere.

When complete, this work will enable us to offer pad ready sites to developers and businesses. creating a quicker path to new development, and giving the 195 sites a great competitive edge over other northeast urban areas.

We'll be reaching out to developers and businesses early this winter with a clear message. Rhode Island has a lot to offer. Our colleges, universities and job training programs are producing a broad-based, highly skilled workforce. Our city neighborhoods are already vital and growing. We are linking together those neighborhoods, the emerging workforce, pad ready sites and an energized urban culture to create unique and attractive opportunities for development.

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