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## **Building momentum with new construction at Quonset - by Steven King**

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Steven King

As the leading engine of economic development and job creation in Rhode Island, Quonset Development Corp. (QDC) is always looking ahead to the next impactful project that can put Rhode Islanders to work. This year, despite the economic realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, Quonset Business Park continues to be a hub of activity with many new construction projects either completed or underway.

Across the Park, Quonset is making critical improvements to our transportation infrastructure. This includes a \$3 million grant funded project for upgrades to the Mill Creek Railyard and a \$500,000 project to construct a new bulkhead for the Rhode Island Fast Ferry Pier. Quonset is also making improvements to our roads by resurfacing, applying rubberized crack sealing to road cracks, while also line striping roads, crosswalks and parking areas. QDC is unique in the region because we provide modern transportation solutions via land, sea or rail for the more than 200 companies here.

Construction at Infinity Meat Solutions' new facility continues at a steady clip with completion expected later this year. Once finished, the 200,000 s/f, \$100 million state-of-the-art meatpacking facility will add more than 700 permanent jobs (along with the 400 jobs during construction) to Quonset, joining the 12,000 workers already at the Business Park.

At the Port of Davisville, Quonset pushes forward with several critical upgrades that are set to expand the port's auto-import capacity and make space for offshore wind. Our construction team recently completed the Pier 2 bulkhead rehabilitation project on the Pier's east and north faces and is now constructing the steel sheet bulkhead on the south face. Quonset also dredged the area around the port to a depth of 33 feet to accommodate more car-carrying vessels and make space for a new pile-supported extension of the pier. The latest phase of the project will include dredging the area north of the pier extension.

At the Rhode Island Air National Guard (RIANG) Base, QDC is managing several construction projects. \$7.3 million in renovations on the fire station's building 11, servicing the Air Guard, Army

Guard, and Quonset State Airport, are nearing completion. Meanwhile, repairs continue on base supply building 5, home to the guard's logistics and readiness squadron. Plans are also in the pipeline for a new vehicle maintenance facility and a new headquarters to replace the current building that the RIANG has used since the late 1970s.

As Rhode Island continues to navigate the COVID-19 economy, maintaining momentum is essential. QDC started this year with an ambitious agenda for improvements and our teams have executed these plans, giving Rhode Island a competitive edge, supporting our state's large and small employers, and creating new opportunities for the future.

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