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RI Ready - Preparing sites for new jobs all over Rhode Island - by governor Dan McKee

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Dan McKee

As Rhode Island's economy continues to rebound and grow, we need to do everything we can to keep that momentum going. To help achieve that, I cut the ribbon in January on Rhode Island Ready, a new \$40 million initiative to create jobs by generating an inventory of pre-permitted, pre-engineered industrial sites statewide. Based on Quonset Business Park's successful "Site Readiness" program, RI Ready will make it easier to build or expand businesses across Rhode Island.

Quonset is one of Rhode Island's great success stories and economic drivers, with over 210 companies and 12,900 jobs. The results at Quonset speak for themselves – in the last decade, their site readiness program has led to over 3,500 new jobs and \$664 million in private investment by 36 companies at 14 developed sites. Quonset provides pre-permitted, pre-engineered sites to new businesses that are shovel ready. A company can begin construction within 90 days of signing a lease. By adopting this blueprint and replicating it statewide, RI Ready will spur industrial development and help create jobs across the Ocean State.

Here's how it works - representatives of eligible sites, with approval from their host city or town, will work with the Quonset team to get their sites "Rhode Island Ready." The team at Quonset will provide an array of services including technical assistance with engineering, permitting and other pre-approvals and activities necessary to prepare the site for new development.

Project sites that meet the following criteria will be considered eligible:

- Sites that will allow for upgraded or improved infrastructure in support of an industrial use; or
- Sites that will allow an existing industrial use or facility to expand significantly; or
- Sites that are approximately 10 acres in size (or are capable of supporting an approximately 100,000 s/f building);
- Sites zoned for industrial or offshore wind support uses, and;
- Sites within one mile of a roadway designated by the state to support industrial traffic.

The application process is a simple four-step approach – each application begins in the "Red", where projects are reviewed and evaluated for enrollment, then the "Orange" step includes technical assistance, full-site engineering, permitting and cost estimates. Next, the "Yellow" step explores capital investment available for appropriate sites. Sites that have reached "Green" status will be pre-permitted, fully engineered and ready to go.

RI Ready is designed to eliminate the uncertainty and red tape that can complicate and slow down new industrial development. By working with communities and businesses, RI Ready will streamline and expedite the permitting process so that businesses will open faster, create job opportunities for

Rhode Islanders faster and get products made in Rhode Island to the market faster.

Check out RIReady.org to start the easy application process today.

Daniel McKee is the governor of the state of Rhode Island.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540