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East Providence updating Comprehensive Plan for 2009

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Communities statewide have, for more than a decade, been mandated to develop Comprehensive Plans under the R.I. Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Act. This important legislation created the framework for communities to develop detailed plans associated with land use development, infrastructure improvements, natural resource and open space preservation, sensible provision of initiatives to create access to a range of housing choices, development and management of programs in support of economic development, and the judicious creation and management of appropriate city services to serve the public, as well as other provisions to assure a system that adequately serves the residents of that community. A well prepared and periodically updated Comprehensive Plan assures that communities are prepared for the myriad of development initiatives as they occur over time. The city of East Providence's original Comprehensive Plan was accepted by the state in June of 1994 with a major update of the plan occurring in 2004. A new update of the plan is required to be completed by the city in 2009 and the city is preparing to create updates and amendments that carry the city into the 21st Century and reflect the changes that are occurring both from a societal perspective and an economic perspective. Development in some communities has begun to shift to a development pattern that supports a mix of uses, coexisting in an environment that supports economic vitality and vibrant communities in which to live. The city took a major step in 2004 by amending our Comprehensive Plan to support the city's Waterfront Special Development District, one of the largest mixed use development districts of its kind in the state. The city's 2009 update will include other changes in support of a changing economy and to promote sustainable technologies that are becoming more feasible in our ever changing world. Advances in computer software and hardware, energy generation technology, transportation technology and other emerging technological advancements can be identified as possible means for improving implementation of elements in our Comprehensive Plan, including the city's Circulation Element, Economic Development Plan Element, Community Services and Facilities Element as well as traditional land use development elements of the Plan.

Implementation of some of these emerging technologies as an integral part of the city's Comprehensive Plan, will certainly present a challenge, particularly in light of current economic times and limited budgets. Some of the proposals will require time and financial resources that may not be immediately available for implementation. Based on the fact that comprehensive plans are designed for long term implementation, however, it is hoped that many of the new approaches in support of economic development and quality of life for city's residents can be realized over time.

For more information visit www.eastprovidence.com or www.eastprovidencewaterfront.com

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