

LIBRA

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WHO WE ARE

Libra is a planning and policy consulting firm based in Providence, RI. Our team includes a variety of professionals with a wide range of public, private, academic and governmental planning experience. Staff's Newport North End Urban Plan was recently recognized with the Donald Hunter Excellence in Economic Development Planning Award as the top economic development planning project in the United States. It is a benchmark for better ways to zone for housing.

Services Provided For RI Housing Municipal Technical Assistance

NEEDS ANALYSIS

To effectively remedy the housing crisis in Rhode Island, municipalities must fully understand existing housing availability. There are many factors that contribute to housing shortages including inadequate levels of new construction, pressures from short term rentals and tourism, pressures from housing markets outside of Rhode Island and particular workforce needs within a community. Libra's Data Analyst has decades of research experience to aid in designing meaningful and useful research in order to better understand housing availability in specific contexts such as your community.

DEVELOPING MODEL ZONING ORDINANCES

Zoning must accomplish many different things at once such as controlling density, separating noxious use from residences and recognizing that people want to live in commodious, beautiful places. Zoning can be use-based (Euclidean) or form-based, striving to enhance the architectural character of a place. Libra staff have experience drafting and adopting form based code in Rhode Island. Additionally, Rhode Island households today are fundamentally different from the time when many zoning ordinances were written; updating local zoning to meet modern lifestyles can serve housing demand.

UPDATING LAND USE/PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

Good policy isn't always enough. Impediments to creating more housing availability can be a matter of process and law. State Law may provide useful and time-tested remedies, but municipalities lack familiarity with these tools. For example, Accessory Dwelling Units are allowed by RI General Law, but not always used to relieve housing pressure. Similarly, Development Plan Review can streamline the construction approval process, gathering the reviewing bodies and ordering oversight. The Libra team has experience updating Land Use policy and processes to solve these problems. Our Municipal Planner has substantial experience doing such work.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

Libra will work with the community at all levels to foster engagement. Each member of our team has experience with outreach methods, such as surveys and public workshops. Our team includes a professional Spanish language translator, who is also an elected official, further enhancing our outreach capabilities.



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PRINCIPAL
ARCHITECTURAL AND
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